

Hortense Memoirs

THE MEMOIRS OF

Queen Hortense

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The Memoirs of Queen Hortense

CHAPTER I

EARLY CHILDHOOD: THE REVOLUTION THE REIGN OF TERROR (1783-1794)

Parentage—Earliest Memories—Visit to Martinique—Mistaken Philanthropy—Flight to France—In Paris during the Revolution—The Arrest of Josephine and Beauharnais—Revolutionary Festivities An Alarming Encounter—The Fête of the Supreme Being—The Execution of Alexandre de Beauharnais.

MY life has been so varied, it has been so crowded with honors, so filled with misfortunes that it has become a subject of public interest. Some people have praised me unduly, others blamed me unjustly, few have really known me. This was on account of my social position, which limited the number of those who could come directly in contact with me. In view of all this I feel I am entitled to demand a fair trial without favor but also without prejudice. All my actions, great and small, have been prompted by my feelings, by my heart. If the heart be pure can one do wrong? My love for everything that is fine, that is worthwhile, has supported me in the midst of my defeats and misfortunes. This feeling has been my strength and my comfort at all times. The following pages are not intended for the crowd. They are addressed to a few sensitive and understanding souls. It is by these I wish my conduct to be judged. To them I shall show myself in my true colors. I say to this little group of friends, "This is my real life."

Study me, pity me, love me, admire me. I feel the need of arousing these emotions. They will form the charm of my declining years. Thus, the only audience I seek is one composed of friends. My brother Eugene knows me too well to need any explanations of my actions. What thought has traversed my mind which I have not shared with him? Our tender affection for one another has made me confide to him every one of my emotions. As for my children it is not from me that they should learn the unhappiness their father caused me. I have suffered so much for their sake, I have cherished them so dearly that when they know the truth they will only love me the more. As far as I myself am concerned, while the writing of these memoirs may prove painful since they will remind me that what should have been the happiest years of my life were full of sorrows and trials, at the same time I shall find satisfaction in recalling the little good I have been able to perform.

My grandfather the Marquis de Beauharnais was Governor General of the French colonies in the West Indies. While living at Martinique he became intimate with the family of the Count Tascher de La Pagerie, who were originally from near Blois in Touraine, but who had settled in the West Indies and owned important estates there.

The Marquis de Beauharnais married Mademoiselle de Chastulle, a rich heiress owning considerable property on the island of Santo Domingo, and had two sons by his marriage. My father, the younger of the two, was born at Martinique, and while still very young returned to France with my grandfather when the latter was recalled from his post. About the same time one of the Taschers de La Pagerie married a Monsieur Renaudin and also settled in France.

In order still further to cement the bonds of friendship uniting the two families, it was decided that my father should marry a member of the same family. When the

ship bearing his request for the hand of the eldest daughter reached Martinique the young lady was dying. Later, when the family in France had asked to have the second sister sent back to Europe for my father, the fact that she had gone into a decline following her sister's death and was afflicted with an incurable disease caused the youngest girl to be selected in her place. Her father accompanied her back to France and she became the Vicomtesse de Beauharnais.

The ceremony was performed in Paris. Thus, it was chance that directed my mother's fate. Eugene was born in 1781 and I in 1783.

Although my mother's social position was brilliant it was not enough so to make her forget her family ties and the country of her birth. Across the Atlantic still lived her mother, now advanced in years, whom she wished to see at least once more.

Then too her wish to leave France may have been stimulated by a certain feeling of resentment toward my father, a resentment easy to understand but difficult to overcome. The latter, handsome in person, highly cultured in mind, was greatly sought after by the most prominent people of both sexes at court and in society. My mother's oversensitive nature took offense at this excessive popularity. Indeed, she became actually jealous and felt that distance and separation would prove the best remedies. My mother and I sailed alone.

I was four years old at the time. We embarked at Havre. Hardly had we left port when a violent squall threatened to capsize our vessel. On arriving at Martinique, we were received by my mother's family with transports of joy. We led a quiet life, visiting now at one plantation, now at another. My mother enjoyed our stay, and we returned to France only after three years. I can recall only one particular incident of our stay at Martinique, but this registered itself on my imagination vividly. I was five years old at the time and I had never known what it was to shed a tear. Everybody had spoiled me, and never had one of my wishes or impulses been thwarted or rebuked. One day, while living on my grandmother's plantation, I was playing beside a table on which she was counting money. Now and then a coin fell to the floor, and I hastened to pick it up and give it back to her. I noticed she made a dozen or more piles of big copper pennies which she placed on a chair when she left the room, taking the rest of the money with her. In some way I cannot describe, the idea came to me that these pennies were intended for me, to do what I pleased with.

I was absolutely convinced of the fact, and gathered the separate piles into my skirt, which I tucked up so as to form a sort of pocket. Having done this I set out with my treasure trove perfectly free from any qualm of conscience, so firmly was I convinced that the money really belonged to me. Going to one of the mulatto house-servants I announced, "John, look at all this money granny gave me for the poor black people. Take me round to their cabins so I can give it to them."

The heat was terrific as the sun was still high, but so keen was my pleasure I could not bear to wait. John and I discussed the best means of doing the greatest good to the greatest number of poor people. I went from cabin to cabin, my money still in my tucked-up skirt, which I held firmly with one hand, only taking out the sums John had decided I ought to give. My mother's old nurse received a double share. At length all my money was gone. A crowd of grateful negroes surrounded me kissing my

hands and feet and I returned to the house triumphantly, filled with joy at having been the cause of so much happiness.

On my arrival I found everything in a state of commotion. My grandmother was looking everywhere for her money. The servants were terrified as no one knew who might be accused. In a flash I realized what I had done and, overcome with despair, was obliged to admit my guilt.

I confessed immediately to my grandmother, but what an agony that confession was. Reproaches were heaped upon me. I was made to feel I had been a liar and a thief. But it was simply my imagination that had led me astray. I had seen the coppers set aside and heaped up into separate piles and concluded they must be intended for the poor. The money was left on a chair within my reach; consequently, I was to take it and distribute it.

Out of these fictions I had made a reality. The humiliation I suffered as a result of this incident was so intense that it influenced my character permanently. Ever afterwards I mistrusted my imagination and I believe I can declare sincerely that, since that far-off day, I have never told a lie or even sought to embellish the truth to the slightest degree.

News of the Revolution caused disturbances in the colony. Monsieur de Viomesnil and Monsieur de Damas in turn became governors, but the latter was obliged to leave precipitately. We were living at Government House at the time. One night my mother received word that the cannon of Fort Royal were to open fire on the town the following day.

Immediately she arranged to have us taken aboard a frigate whose captain she knew. As we crossed the fields, which are called savannahs, a cannon-ball fell close behind us. The next day the town was seized by the revolutionists, and the French ships were ordered to return to their anchorage under threat of being fired on by all the guns of the fort. The crew of our vessel announced their intention of returning to France. They carried out their threat and hoisted sail, but as we were leaving the harbor the mutineers fired on us.

Thanks to Providence we escaped untouched. It was in this unexpected and sudden manner we left Martinique. We had not been able to say farewell to any of our dear ones.

The frigate on which we found ourselves was called the Sensible. Toulon was her destination. The crossing was favorable as far as the Straits of Gibraltar. There our pilot made a mistake and steered too near the African coast. We touched bottom. A few instants later the ship was aground.

Sailors, passengers and children all tugged at the ropes, and once more we escaped an imminent danger. On her arrival at Toulon (early in November, 1790) my mother learned for the first time of the events that were disrupting France. The Revolution had broken out, and my father had become a prominent figure of the political party whose doctrines he had espoused. His brother had joined an opposing group, while my grandfather had retired to Fontainebleau accompanied by his old friend Madame Renaudin, one of my mother's aunts.

It was to Fontainebleau that she and I went to live. Eugene had been a boarder at the College d'Harcourt. He left school and joined us. It was at this period that he and I developed that similarity of tastes and feelings which caused us always to agree in our amusements, our happiness and our misfortune, and to react in the same way to any event affecting our common lot. No premonition warned us of the brilliant but checkered fate that lay before us. Indeed, my brother and I felt that considering our extreme youth we had already had more than our share of adventures.

We discussed at length the experiences through which we had passed. I described my trip to America, the revolt of the negroes, our hasty departure, the danger we were in when cannon-balls fell all round our frigate and the almost equally great peril that threatened us when our ship almost sank off the African coast.

Eugene had not been so far afield. Nor did he foresee that in time Fate would lead him, now through the sands of the desert, now through the icy wastes of Russia. He was still a mere schoolboy, living with a tutor at the College d'Harcourt and he admitted that I had had more thrilling adventures than any he had known.

Yet he too had tales to tell. He described for instance, with all the vivacity that accompanies our earliest memories, what had befallen him the day of the celebration in honor of the Federation. He and his tutor, the latter wearing the full dress of an abbe, had gone out early in the morning.

They intended to visit the Champ de Mars where the festivities were to take place. On the way they found themselves surrounded by a crowd of enthusiastic working people bound for the same destination and transporting earth and other materials for the construction of the amphitheater which is still in existence.

My brother walked beside his tutor, holding the latter's hand. Suddenly six fishwives, who were dragging a little cart, laid hold of the abbe, harnessed him between the shafts, climbed into the cart themselves, and began whipping him to make him haul them along. The aggressors paid no attention to the ecclesiastic's six year old companion. Eugene, however, furious at seeing his tutor thus assaulted, rushed to his defense. Seizing an umbrella, the only weapon within his reach, he ran after the car, belaboring with all his might those who came in his way. At the same time, he demanded loudly the release of the tutor.

His courageous attitude apparently attracted the attention of some personage possessing authority, who released the victim from his ridiculous position without regard for the tumble the sudden unhitching of their steed might cause the fishwives. Too young at the time to understand what was going on around us I can only recall a few episodes of the days of the Revolution. At the time of the flight of the King and his arrest at Varennes my father was President of the Constituent Assembly. His firm attitude, the manner in which he maintained order in Paris aroused, for a time, great enthusiasm.

Even in our retreat at Fontainebleau whenever people caught sight of my brother and myself looking out of a window there would be cries, "There are our Dauphin and Dauphine." Whenever this occurred, we retired hastily, as incapable of understanding the cause of the demonstration as we were

of surmising what the future held in store for us. At the close of the session of the Constituent Assembly my father left Paris to take over his post with the Army of the North to which he had just been appointed with the title of general. He wished Eugene to return to school.

My mother considered the time had come when my education also should be seriously commenced. Madame de Chabriillan, abbess of the convent of the Abbaye aux Bois, was a relative of my family, and it was to her care I was confided.

In order that she might see us both more frequently my mother left Fontainebleau and settled in Paris. At the convent I happened to be the youngest of the boarders. Consequently, everyone spoiled me—the abbess, the nuns, my fellow pupils; and in my new surroundings I received the same tender, affectionate care to which my mother, who could not bear to see either of her children unhappy and who was constantly afraid of causing me the slightest sorrow, had accustomed me.

Thus, my first contact with life encouraged my belief that everything and everybody was delightful. If some involuntary fault on my part provoked a frown or a word of reproof from those about me I sought at once to adopt an attitude that would win their forgiveness. I promised to behave better and did my best to carry out my resolutions. A few months only had elapsed after my admission to the convent when my mother sent for me. It was the tenth of August (1792). The mob was attacking the Palace of the Tuileries. Paris was in an uproar. On such a day my mother felt she should be with her children. Shortly afterwards the schools and convents were destroyed. We continued to live with my mother until conditions became so unsettled in France that she decided it was safer for us abroad.

The Prince de Salm, who held the same political views as my father, but did not inspire the same confidence because he was not French, decided to emigrate to England. His sister, the Princess de Hohenzollern, was to accompany him, and it was suggested we should be taken along as their children. The moment my father heard we were leaving the country he dispatched a messenger to the Prince asking him to send us back to Paris. He did not wish us to leave France. The message reached us at Saint-Pol in the Province of Artois where we had stopped for a short time. Had it come two days later we should have been on shipboard.

The Prince and Princess brought us back to Paris themselves, and, in spite of her anxiety for our safety, our mother was delighted to see us again. She was living in retirement at the time, not at all in touch with the people in power, and it was her kind heart which caused her to emerge from her seclusion. She did so on behalf of Madame de Moulins, an old lady of eighty years. The latter called on my mother with the news of the arrest and imprisonment of her niece, a Mademoiselle de Bethisy. The niece was only nineteen, but in spite of her youth the fact she had reentered France from abroad rendered her execution likely, if the case was ever brought to trial. With tears in her eyes the poor old aunt besought my mother to save her niece from certain death. It was useless for my mother to reply she could do nothing, that she had no influence with, and was quite unknown in official circles. Madame de Moulins assured her that a request made by the wife of a general in one of the French armies would meet with a favorable reception.

It is always pleasant to feel we can be useful to another human being. My mother called on the various authorities, presented her petition and secured the release of her protegee.

It was Tallien who was the most active in assisting my mother. This was the first occasion on which he won our gratitude, which was all the deeper because in those days to help the unfortunate was to risk one's own safety. In the midst of the upheaval that was taking place in Paris parents did not find it easy to attend to their children's education, or to select their teachers. It was my mother's companion Mademoiselle de Lannoy who acted as my governess. She belonged to a good family, Was well educated and considerably gifted along certain lines. Her lessons should have proved useful to me. Unfortunately, her attention was principally absorbed by Political matters.

The decree forbidding members of the nobility to hold military commands obliged my father to resign from the Army of the Rhine where he had succeeded Monsieur de Custine as commander-in-chief. He withdrew to his estate at La Ferté Beauharnais where, after a short time he was placed under arrest and brought back to the prison of the Carmelites in Paris. My mother, although she went to see all the persons who had helped her in the case of Mademoiselle de Bethisy, was unable even to learn the reasons for his imprisonment. In fact her steps in his behalf resulted in her own arrest, and the only favor she was able to secure was that of being confined in the same prison as her husband.

What intense grief we felt the morning we were told that she had entered our room to bid us farewell. Tears rolled down her cheeks. She had not wished our slumber to be disturbed. "Let them sleep," she said to our governess. "I could not bear the sight of their sorrow. I would not have the strength to part from them." Ah, how tragic an awakening we had! We were alone, separated from both our parents.

This was my first encounter with unhappiness. My brother Eugene in spite of his youth possessed already that energy which is part of a courageous nature. His longing to see our parents was so intense that he was convinced he could make his wish come true. He hurried off to see Tallien and inform him of our misfortune. I waited impatiently to learn the outcome of the interview. It seemed impossible to me that anyone could resist my brother's eloquence. But, alas, he who had helped us before was no longer in a position to do so. Under the menace of terror men's hearts had frozen and become inaccessible to the appeal of justice and pity. Innocence deprived of all her defenders was left to perish. How true it is that our earliest impressions mark our nature with an indelible stamp and frequently produce beneficial results The thought of the joy I should have felt on this occasion had my petition been favorably received as what aroused in me a longing to comfort, protect and befriend all those in affliction, in other words that impulse to do good which is the only thing that makes power and position worth having.

Our principal interest now became the daily package we sent the prisoners, in which we included whatever articles they might be in need of. Entrance to their prison was forbidden us. After a short time, we were not allowed to correspond with them.

To replace our letters, we added to the list of articles included in the package the phrase, "Your children are in good health." The gatekeeper, however, was harsh enough to rub out this remark. In order to circumvent him we took turns in copying the list so that the sight of our two handwritings might assure our parents we were both still alive. About this time a law passed that all children of noble birth must learn a trade.

My brother, in spite of our governess's despair, chose that of a carpenter. Mademoiselle de Lannoy was constantly criticizing the republican form of government; she laid claim to a title at a time when everyone else was concealing his and declared about everything that took place, "A thing like that would never have been allowed to happen under the old regime."

Nevertheless, for the sake of our parents she allowed Eugene to go to the carpenter who was nearby and take lessons. His teacher was an ardent Jacobin who with pride displayed as trophy a hammer belonging to Louis XVI which he had acquired at the sack of the Palace of the Tuileries. With him lived two sisters, former nuns, who were as subdued in their manner as he was violent. In spite of his political views the carpenter was always polite to my brother, and the two sisters used to give Eugene secretly little images of the Virgin and the Saints which he brought delightedly home to me as rewards he had received for his good work.

Although we were no longer living with the Princess de Hohenzollern, we went to see her every Sunday. Her brother had been arrested at the same time as our father. In her loneliness and worry she welcomed our presence as a relief. To us, in our isolation, she was a moral support. It was during this period that orders were given for a patriotic banquet to be held simultaneously all over Paris. On this solemn occasion tables were to be spread in the street, and masters and servants, men, women and children, were to eat side by side regardless of rank. To evade the law was to risk being arrested. In order to make it impossible to disobey this decree everyone had been obliged to inscribe his name on a placard affixed to the main entrance of the house where he lived. It happened that the mansion in which we were staying was nearly deserted. My mother was in prison, and the same fate had befallen an American (West Indian) family who were friends of hers and who also lived there. Our man servant, our chambermaid, the porter and his wife, my brother and I played the landlords on this occasion.

My governess, who claimed to belong to the old family of De Lannoy of Flanders, was furious at the idea of being obliged to sit beside the servants and the porter. She, who had been brought up at the Convent of Saint Cloud, who on two occasions had caught a glimpse of the Queen, could not admit such a state of social chaos. Once more, she assured us, "A thing like that would not have been allowed under the old regime."

Like any other children of our age, we were delighted to see our governess humiliated. Moreover, in spite of our youth, both my brother and myself were aware that her ridiculous pretensions might do harm to the cause of our parents. The table was laid outside the entrance of the house, and we were about to sit down to our meal when we were startled by the cries of some passersby who addressed us by the terrifying epithet of aristocrats.

It seems we were at fault in not placing the table in the middle of the roadway. We hastened to correct this error. The weather was fine. The lights set on the tables, the crowds in the streets, some eating, some strolling about out of curiosity, formed a curious scene. In order to have made it still more brilliant the windows of the houses should have been illuminated, because in the purely residential districts where there were no shops the streets were too dark. After supper we asked Mademoiselle de Lannoy to take us through some of the other parts of the city that were more crowded and consequently livelier than the neighborhood where we lived (close to the junction of the Boulevard Saint Germain and the rue Saint-Dominique). In the business section the tables were lined up one after the other. Some of them were decorated with a roof of green boughs. The whole effect was attractive.

Nevertheless, general gaiety was lacking. Every face wore an expression of uneasiness. Vagabonds in rags wandered about the city drinking and shouting revolutionary songs. They carried terror to the' hearts of the peaceable middle class, who were still further alarmed by their bellicose manner. Only in the poorer quarters was any trace of natural high spirits or spontaneous merrymaking to be found.

As we passed, a shoemaker clad in his working clothes rose from his table, came up beside our governess and embraced her. You may be sure she lost no time in taking us back to the house, announcing as she did so, "A thing like that would never have been allowed under the old regime."

My brother as he witnessed the discomfiture of Mademoiselle de Lannoy glanced at me maliciously, because the good woman was extremely plain. Eugene claimed the shoemaker's action was prompted simply by a desire to correct mademoiselle's haughtiness of bearing. I said, "I'm very glad to be only a little girl for that horrid man might have tried to kiss me too."

"I would not have allowed him to," answered Eugene, drawing himself up with the full dignity of his twelve years.

I can still remember some of the other festivities of this period. They were planned on a grand scale and were frequently imposing, but in later years I have found the working classes enjoying their pleasures more genuinely than they did during the period of which I am now writing. Although the power wielded by the crowd was very great, it was accompanied by a sense of responsibility and a feeling of uneasiness. Poverty was widespread. The intoxication of the days of the Federation had been replaced by a feeling of alarm and of terror, which ran through all the strata of society. Even those who used fear as a weapon were its victims and frequently were cruel only because they themselves were afraid.

One day, I was returning to the rue Saint Dominique after paying a visit to the Princess de Hohenzollern. Her youngest chambermaid was with me, my brother having stayed home to study. As we turned a corner, we caught sight of a crowd of men advancing toward us to the sounds of loud music. People in the street sought refuge wherever they could. As the crowd approached, doors and windows closed precipitately. Not even the porters put their heads out of the gate to see what was happening. The maid and I were frightened to find ourselves thus absolutely alone in the street. We dared neither advance nor retreat, but huddled under the overhanging porch of a monumental gateway. I never found

out where the mob was going. I can only remember seeing a throng of men with bare arms, singing the revolutionary *ca ira* and the *Marseillaise*, go past me carrying a Statue of Liberty.

I was still very young but their wild behavior, even though I did not know its significance, frightened me extremely. I grew more terrified when I saw the mob stop in front of a house directly across the street from where we were. To the accompaniment of savage curses the crowd attempted to break in the doorway and scale the walls. As they did so they accused the owners of the house of being aristocrats and threatened to hang them from the lamp post.

The cause of this outburst was that in passing they had caught sight of a carving of the Virgin on the front of the house. Ladders were quickly obtained from somewhere or other, and the crowd with swords hacked and mutilated the carving. Such behavior profoundly disturbed my religious beliefs.

My terror was replaced by a feeling of commiseration for the unfortunate beings who by committing such an act had incurred the dire penalties that Providence would certainly inflict. My pious imagination pictured these chastisements in detail, and I pitied those upon whom they were about to fall. Finally, the mob continued on its way, but instead of going to meet my brother I returned to the house of the Princess de Hohenzollern and told her what I had just seen. The Princess scolded me for having gone out with the youngest chambermaid for it was always the eldest one who was supposed to take me home.

There was a Revolutionary guard stationed at the Princess's house. She had under her care her nephew the Prince of Salm and a young English girl whom she was bringing up. The four of us were too young to understand the events that were going on about us, and we used to laugh and play on the terrace of Salm palace [at present the Chancellerie of the Legion d'Honneur, Quai d'Orsay - Translator] with all the unconcern of youth. Yet, daily at a certain hour, when we caught sight in the distance of crowds gathering on the Place Louis XV around a structure, we knew to be a scaffold we would hang our heads, look away and reenter the house heavy at heart. Nor could we restrain the flood of tears when we thought of the unfortunates whose last hour had come. Little did we imagine, however, that our parents might someday suffer the same fate. Convinced of their innocence we waited impatiently the moment of their release.

It was during this period that the Princess de Hohenzollern suffered a loss which further increased her fears for the safety of those who were especially dear to us. She had offered the hospitality of the Salm mansion to a young Polish woman, the Princess Lubomirska, twenty-four years of age and very beautiful. Acting with the thoughtlessness that characterizes youth, the latter had, presumably, made remarks criticizing the government then in power. She was arrested and immediately executed.

One of the ceremonies which took place during the Revolution and which I remember particularly well was the Feast of the Supreme Being, which was held on Sunday, June 8, 1794. Acting at the suggestion of Robespierre, the Convention had officially recognized the existence of a Supreme Being and the Immortality of the Soul.

A day was set apart for the celebration of this event. The announcement was received with satisfaction by all the people we knew. Our writing teacher was an ardent Jacobin, our professor of history and foreign languages a no less fervent royalist, but both at this time regarded Robespierre with an equal degree of admiration in spite of the difference of their political views. Robespierre was then President of the Convention.

It was rumored that, taking advantage of the celebration, he was to proclaim himself king, free all the prisoners and reestablish peace, order and religion. I can remember that everyone looked forward to the festive day as bringing with it the end of all our troubles. In spite of the existing financial crises we did not suffer from lack of funds.

Every month, Monsieur Henry, a banker in Dunkirk, sent us a certain fixed allowance which he afterwards drew, through London, on my grandmother, who still retained possession of her plantation in Martinique. This arrangement allowed our governess even during our parents' absence to provide us with all the comforts to which we had been accustomed.

The day of the celebration at last arrived. To attend the ceremony, I dressed in a white linen frock with a large blue belt. My curly hair fell loosely over my shoulders. As she dressed me the maid said, "You must look very, very pretty today for perhaps we shall get word your father and mother are to be let out of prison and you will be allowed to see them and give them a kiss." The idea of this possibility made me almost mad with delight.

On arriving at the Tuileries, we saw the members of the Convention file down a long wooden staircase that had been erected near the central hall and led to the garden. All were in full dress. In front of the rest came a single figure conspicuous from the fact that he alone had his hair powdered.

"That is Robespierre," cried the crowd. "He is the only deputy who powders his hair. Listen, listen to what he will say." We could not hear a word. The deputies approached the great central basin in the garden, which had been drained dry. In it had been placed various wooden statues representing Atheism and other false doctrines. These had been surrounded with inflammable material. A lighted torch was handed Robespierre. With it he set fire to the structure.

In an instant everything had been destroyed, and a mass of smoke and flame rose skyward. A lighted spark fell on my dress, burning my chest. My linen frock caught fire, and it was only with difficulty that the flames were extinguished, and I was carried back to where we lived. To add to my suffering nothing was said about freeing the prisoners. Thus, it was in pain and anguish that I ended a day I had looked forward to with joyous anticipation.

One day a woman we did not know called at our house and wished to have us accompany her but without giving any further details. Mademoiselle de Lannoy objected. Thereupon the woman produced a note in my mother's handwriting giving us permission to go with the stranger. After further hesitation, as she feared a trap, our governess yielded reluctantly. The woman led us to a garden situated in the rue de Sevres.

Telling us not to make a sound she let us into the gardener's cottage. Opposite there was a big building. A window opened and my father and mother appeared. Filled with surprise and delight I uttered a cry and stretched out my arms toward my parents. They made me a sign not to speak, but a sentinel on duty at the foot of the wall had heard us and gave the alarm. The unknown woman hurried us away. We learned later that the window of the prison had been pitilessly walled up. It was the last time I ever saw my father. A few days later he was no more.

A few moments before his execution my father wrote my mother the following letter, a last testimonial of his affection for us and his devotion to his country:

"4th Thermidor in the Second year of the Republic, one and indivisible.

All the evidence given at the so-called examinations which have been today inflicted on a number of prisoners shows that I am the victim of foul calumnies spread by certain aristocrats who pretend to be patriots and are now confined here. The knowledge that this infernal Conspiracy will not cease until it has brought me before the revolutionary tribunal deprives me of any hope of ever seeing you again, my friend, or of ever again embracing my children. I will not dwell on my regrets; my warm affection for my children, the brotherly fondness I have for you must convince you of my feelings in this respect. I grieve also to leave a land I love, for which I would willingly have laid down my life a thousand times over. Not only can I no longer serve France but the manner of my death makes me appear an unworthy citizen. This torturing thought forbids me to beg you to cherish my memory. Try however to rehabilitate it. Prove that, in the eyes of all men, a lifetime spent in serving our country's cause and in assuring the triumph of liberty and justice should outweigh the slanderous accusations of a few individuals, most of whom belong to classes we rightly look upon with suspicion. Yet this task of yours must not be undertaken immediately, for in the midst of revolutionary struggles a great nation seeking to pulverize its chains must be ever watchful and be more afraid to spare a guilty man than to punish unjustly an innocent one. I die not only with that calmness of mind which in spite of everything allows us to think fondly of our dear ones, but also with that courage which animates a man who recognizes no master, whose conscience is clear, whose spirit is upright, whose most ardent wish is the prosperity of the Republic. Good-by, dear friend. Console yourself for the sake of our children. Console them by enlightening their minds, and above all by teaching them that by their courage and patriotism they may efface from my name the blot of my execution and remind the world of my deeds and my claims to our nation's gratitude. Good-by. You know those who are dear to me; be a consolation to them, and by your care prolong my life in their hearts. Good-by. I press you and my dear children for the last time to my breast.

ALEXANDRE B."

I cannot express my grief at the loss of my beloved father. The memory of it will never leave me, and only time has diminished the intensity of the emotion his horrible death aroused. In addition to this calamity we were harassed by other alarms. The Princess de Hohenzollern was as distracted with grief as

we were ourselves. Her brother the Prince de Salm had perished the same day as my father. We spent our days with her, sharing each other's sorrow. The Princess had only one desire: to leave France.

She prayed never to see again the country where she had been brought up, which had become so dear to her, but where she had suffered so cruel a loss.

There were rumors that the children of persons who had perished on the scaffold were to be arrested. My brother considered himself as the natural protector not only of me but also of my mother. Despite his youth he already showed that decision of character and calmness in the face of danger which he displayed afterwards. "Don't worry," he would say to me. "I'll never abandon you. I won't allow you to be taken away. I'm going to enlist. When I'm a soldier no one will dare touch my sister or my mother. While I'm off with the army and until our mother comes back you can live at La Ferté Beauharnais."

"Go and live all alone without you!" I exclaimed. "I'd never dare do that."

"Well, then, come along with me. You won't be afraid of the shooting, will you?"

"No, I promise you I won't," I answered bravely. Thus, our childish plans, which we considered so easy to carry out, helped reassure us and drove away our fears. But they were unable to dissipate our sorrow for our loss or our anxiety over our mother's fate.

She was to have been executed at the same time as my father, but when she heard her name called, she fell in a swoon and when she revived was so weak that it was impossible even to carry her. "We'll take her some other time," declared the men charged with collecting those to be taken to the scaffold."

This took place on the 5th Thermidor [July, 1794]. Four days later the fall of Robespierre put an end to the execution and saved our mother.

CHAPTER II IN THE DAYS OF THE DIRECTORY (1794-1799)

Josephine's Release—General Hoche and Eugene—Life at Boarding-School—A Dinner with Barras—First Meeting with Napoleon—Bonaparte's Courtship—Josephine's Marriage—Following the Italian Campaign—Family Alliances—News from Egypt—The Return of Bonaparte—The 18th Brumaire (Establishment of the Consulate).

THE reign of Robespierre was over, but mother had not yet been released, when we received the visit of the celebrated beauty Madame de Fontenay, who later became Madame Tallien. Our visitor petted us and encouraged us with promises that mother would soon be with us again.

This indeed happened a few days after-wards. Tallien had been active in bringing about her release, using his influence to the best advantage. When, afterwards, he asked mother as a favor to receive the woman he had just married and who was attracting a somewhat undesirable amount of attention, could she do otherwise than comply with his request?

General Hoche had been a friend of my father. He had shared his captivity and nearly suffered the same fate, escaping only by a curious accident. In order to increase the number of executions the authorities were in the habit of implicating a certain number of prisoners in imaginary conspiracies among themselves. Instead of being placed with the other prisoners, Hoche as a measure of special severity had been condemned to solitary confinement; hence no charge of this sort could be brought against him. It was to this he owed his life. On his release, after the 9th Thermidor, he resumed his rank, sent for Eugene and took the latter with him when he was appointed commander of the Army of the Vendee, Hoche believed that one cannot begin too soon to form a man's character.

Although Eugene was only thirteen at the time, the General treated him exactly as he would have any other orderly, did not spare him any fatigue and exposed him to every danger. This was the beginning of my brother's military career. It was at this rough school that he became acquainted with the soldiers' ways and learned how to make himself popular with them. But what the General considered merely part of a useful education filled my mother with alarm.

Moreover, Eugene had not completed his regular studies. He was therefore recalled from the army, and he and I were placed at two boarding schools that had just been opened at Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

The one I entered was presided over by Madame Campan, formerly first lady in waiting to Marie Antoinette. Ruined by the fall of her royal mistress, without influence or means but possessing lofty ideals, Madame Campan sought by the use of her superior intelligence and fine mind to earn her livelihood and retain her independence.

Such was the woman to whose care I was now confided and who devoted herself to me with all of a mother's affection and understanding. More anxious to develop our spiritual natures than merely to cultivate such natural accomplishments as we happened to possess, she nevertheless pointed out

constantly, by striking examples, the uses we could make of the latter. The misfortunes that befell Marie Antoinette and to which Madame Campan often referred made a deep impression on me. I was particularly struck to discover the amount of harm that can be done through malicious gossip and to note what changes of fortune may befall even persons of the highest rank.

The conduct of certain Frenchmen who had sought refuge abroad and who, while there, were willing to stoop to begging rather than earn a living by honest toil taught me another lesson. I felt that to be truly independent one must first acquire those things that insure this independence, in other words, strength of character and a sound education.

I sought earnestly to develop these qualities although handicapped by a too great natural facility of execution which interfered with serious concentration. But I was the more assiduous in my efforts as my mind was constantly haunted by the thought of my mother's captivity and my father's tragic fate.

My imagination was still so dominated by these memories that I constantly felt a menace suspended over me. The thought of being able to overcome it filled me with delight, and I rejoiced in the idea that no matter what Fate might have in store for me I should never stoop or humiliate myself. But the future did not always wear such a gloomy aspect.

Adele Auguié, niece of Madame Campan, a girl of my own age with a divinely sweet disposition, had become my closest friend, the depositary of my innermost thoughts. To her I described the romance of my life as it was to be in the days to come. "I intend to be happy," I used to say, "for I shall be ready to meet whatever may befall me. My ambition is to acquire moral courage. Armed with that one need fear nothing. I want my husband, whoever he may be, to love me. To win his affection I shall educate myself in such a way that if he proves too worldly, I shall know how to make him more serious minded, if he is jealous, I shall be ready to sacrifice all social pleasures for his sake. In short, I shall cure him, whatever ailment he may have."

We spent the greater part of our recesses in such conversation, and as I grew older these ideas became more and more firmly fixed in my mind. Although less high strung than I, my friend came to share my views. I had preached them with all the fervor of my convictions till she had adopted them as her own.

It is with pleasure I dwell on these early years, the only happy days I ever had. Never again did I wield as absolute a power as that which my schoolfellows conferred upon me. Why did they do so? They could not surmise the rank my family later would occupy. Was it because certain natural gifts attract as much attention at boarding school as they do in society? Was it because I was more advanced than the others in my studies, first in music, in drawing, in dancing, the fastest runner, the best at games as well as in the classroom?

No, I believe I owed my popularity, the sort of suzerainty I possessed, to my constant, all absorbing desire to be loved, a desire which expressed itself in every one of my actions. I was so afraid of creating jealousy that I sought to conceal anything that made me look superior to the rest. For instance, I had at boarding school a very beautiful lace veil. Not only would I not wear it, but I would not

even let my fellow pupils see it for fear it might make them envious. I disliked having the teacher hold me up as a model and was tempted to make a deliberate mistake so that the other girl might not feel humiliated. At any rate I always found an excuse for her. I was frequently called upon to decide controversies between two of my comrades, and my verdict was received with respect.

If a new girl entered the school who was awkward in her behavior and was made fun of by the other pupils, I would take her under my protection and at once the teasing would stop. Each girl was supposed to take her turn in keeping the classroom neat and tidy. I was anxious to do my share, but whenever my turn came the other girls struggled to be allowed to do my work for me. It was considered a privilege.

This general admiration was very dear to me, but perhaps it caused me to become too accustomed to being sincerely liked and admired. What a disappointment is when we realize that the people about us are generally hypocrites. This is especially true if your nature is too sensitive not to be hurt by that casual attitude which criticizes without taking the trouble to understand, or that malicious spirit which condemns unjustly. I can declare, however, that the fact of being admittedly a favorite at school aroused in me only an overmastering desire to deserve this popularity. Later this wish to be liked did me harm, for having acted as I thought for the best, I could not understand why I did not receive the praise I felt was due me. My mother had put us in school but she could not bear not to see us often and very frequently we were sent to Paris.

During one of these trips she informed us she was dining with the Director Barras, and that we were to accompany her. "Is it possible, mother," I exclaimed impetuously, "you actually associate with such people? Have you forgotten our family misfortunes?"

"My daughter," she answered with that angelic gentleness which never left her, "you must consider the fact that since your father's death I have been obliged to attempt to save as much of his fortune as possible in order that it should not be lost to you. Should I be ungrateful toward those who have helped and protected me?"

I recognized that I was wrong. I begged my mother's pardon and went with her to the Directory established in the Palace of the Luxembourg. Barras had invited a number of guests, of whom Tallien and his wife were the only ones I knew. At the dinner table I found myself placed between my mother and a general who, in order to talk to her, kept leaning forward so often and with so much vivacity that he tired me and I was forced to push back my chair.

I thus found myself obliged to examine closely his countenance, which was handsome, very expressive, but remarkably pale. He spoke with great animation and apparently devoted his entire attention to my mother. It was General Bonaparte, and his interest in her was due to an incident which I must relate.

Following the riots in the 13th Vendemiaire [October 4, 1795] a law was passed forbidding any private citizen to have weapons in his house. My brother, unable to bear the thought of surrendering

the sword that had belonged to his father, hurried off to see General Bonaparte, who at that time was in command of the troops stationed in Paris.

He told the General he would kill himself rather than give up the sword. The General, touched by his emotion, granted his request and at the same time asked the name of his mother, saying he would be glad to meet a woman who could inspire her son with such ideals.

Whatever might have been the cause, the General's very evident interest in my mother reminded me that she might someday remarry. This idea was painful to me.

As I told my brother with whom I discussed the matter, "She won't love us as much as she does now."

When the General called at our house, he felt the coolness of our reception. He did his best to change our attitude, but his method with me did not succeed. He tried to tease me, making fun of women in general, and the more vigorously I defended my sex the more violently he attacked it.

I was about to be confirmed. The General declared I was bigoted. When I answered, "You were confirmed. Why shouldn't I be?" he laughed at having roused my temper. I, not guessing he was doing this only in jest, replied seriously to all his remarks and took a dislike to him. Every time I came to Paris from Saint Germain, I found him more assiduous in his attentions to my mother. He had become the center of her little group of friends, which included Madame de Lameth, Madame d'Aiguillon, Madame de la Galissonniere, Madame Tallien and several men.

The General's conversation was always worth listening to. He even managed to make the ghost stories he occasionally told interesting by the way in which he related them. Indeed, he was so openly admired by the little group that I could not refrain from informing my mother of my fears. She only combated them half-heartedly. I wept as I begged her not to remarry, or at least not to choose a man whose rank would separate her from us.

But already the General's will had more weight than mine. I know however that my grief caused my mother to hesitate for some time. She did not yield until she saw the General about to leave without her. He had been appointed commander-in-chief of the army in Italy. She loved him and could not bear the thought of giving him up. Finally, she consented to become his wife. It was Madame Campan who broke the news.

Our mother, aware of the sorrow it would cause me, did not dare to do so herself. As a matter of fact, I felt very badly about it. Madame Campan attempted to quiet me, pointing out how this marriage would help my brother's career. He looked forward to being a soldier and could not be one under better auspices than those of a general who was also his stepfather. Moreover, the General had not been implicated in the horrors of the Revolution.

On the contrary he had suffered by it. His family was an old one, honorably known in Corsica. In every respect the marriage was suitable. I accepted these arguments.

My interest in the success of my brother and the knowledge that my stepfather had had no share in the crimes which had led my father to the scaffold caused me to consider the marriage more favorably, until the moment of my mother's departure for Italy renewed my grief.

My first cousin Emilie de Beauharnais whom mother had taken care of after my uncle Francois's departure from France, was sent to school with me, and Jerome Bonaparte, the General's young brother, was sent to the same school as Eugene.

Having done this mother left to rejoin her husband. A short time passed, and the newspapers were filled with accounts of my stepfather's victories. Every day Madame Campan would try to read me the descriptions of them, but I refused to listen and left the room. Then she would send for me and oblige me to listen, saying as she did so, "Do you realize your mother has chosen an extraordinary man as her husband? What gifts he possesses! How remarkable he is!"

"Madame," I replied one day, very seriously, "I will give him credit for all his other conquests, but I will never forgive him for having conquered mother."

The expression amused Madame Campan. She repeated it. It spread all over town. The reactionaries living around the Faubourg Saint Germain became enthusiastic over my attitude, attributing to me political opinions I never dreamed of having.

For some time, Madame Campan had been urging me to write to my stepfather. I had always refused. How could I be expected to express sentiments I did not feel? It was out of the question. Yet on the other hand I could not dwell on my disappointment that the marriage had taken place. I thought it best not to write at all, but as Madame Campan insisted, I finally yielded.

My letter centered around one idea and might be summed up as follows: "I have been told of your marriage with my mother. What surprises me is that you, whom I have so often heard speak badly of women, should have made up your mind to marry one of these creatures."

The General's reply was very long and written in an extremely difficult hand, practically indecipherable unless one were used to it. It was not till years later, during the Consulate, that Bourrienne, the First Consul's private secretary, revealed to me all the kind phrases it contained.

It was about this time that I was confirmed. I took communion with all the fervor of a person whose soul is as ardent as it is innocent. My brother was confirmed the same day. Every Sunday he spent two hours with me in Madame Campan's private apartment. But I did not enjoy this pleasure very long as General Bonaparte sent for Eugene to go to Italy to act as his aide-de-camp. How cruelly I suffered at being deprived of the companionship of the brother I loved so dearly! The only consolation left me was the affection of my fellow pupils, the tender care of Madame Campan.

The latter worried about the intensity of my emotions. She sought to remedy what she called my excessive sensitiveness by developing my mind, by teaching me from the outset to beware of that impulsiveness which later in life might prove prejudicial to me.

Fortunately, I took my pleasures as seriously as I did my sorrows. As a rule I was very light-hearted, even hoydenish. This tendency to a great extent remedied my too keen "sensibility." I sought always to taste to the full every emotion, nothing was indifferent to me, everything affected me profoundly. At vacation time the mothers came to take away their daughters.

I remained behind. Apparently, I had no family of my own. I felt very sorry for myself. This was unjust, for no general, no aide-de-camp arrived in Paris from Italy bearing despatches or captured flags who did not also bring me messages and souvenirs from my mother. My stepfather also sent me watches and Venetian chains by his aides-de-camp Marmont and Lavalette.

Everything was done to show me I was not forgotten, that I was not really abandoned. My grandfather was living at Fontainebleau.

The Princess de Hohenzollern had left France a short time after the death of her brother the Prince de Salm. There was no one I could go out with. To be sure Madame Tallien asked me to spend a few days with her but I invariably declined. I did not feel that her circle formed proper surroundings for me.

My close friendship with Madame Campan's nieces helped me to bear the separation from my family, and occasionally I went to Grignon, their father's handsome estate.

One day, Madame Campan took us on an outing to visit one of her aunts who lived at Versailles. In the evening tea was served and other guests came in. Among them was a poet who became much interested in our Party and particularly in me. I did not care especially for his attentions at the time but was overcome with surprise and even grief (I remember I cried like a child) when the next day I found in a newspaper some verses he had written for me.

Madame Campan laughed at the sight of my despair. "Just think, madame," I said sobbing, "he's only a flatterer trying to obtain my stepfather's favor. In doing so he is hurting me terribly. In order to be happy a woman must not attract attention, and here's my name in print in a newspaper. People will notice it, will talk about me, and I shall certainly be unhappy."

I began to weep again, perhaps with a foreboding of the future. Madame Campan realized I was too deeply upset for her to joke about the matter. She said to me tenderly, "Yes, people will talk about you. That is probably a part of your fate. Remember you must never do harm, for every act you perform will be known. The higher a person's rank, the more severely he is criticized. Accept what destiny holds in store for you. Doubtless it will be happiness, for you will be good and have reason to be satisfied with your conduct."

To return to my poet. My dislike for him was so intense that, fifteen years later, when he sent me one of his volumes with an extremely polite letter, the moment I recognized his name I threw away the book and the letter, exclaiming as I did so, "Ah, that horrid man. He brought me bad luck."

Madame de Campan tried to instill in the hearts of her pupils a feeling which very few women are conscious of, namely, a love for one's country. How many famous Frenchmen have been lacking in patriotism! Otherwise they would have spared France many of those misfortunes which resulted from their acts and which darken their fame. One should love one's country, and must be constantly ready to sacrifice oneself for it. This is what I sought to teach my children. Perhaps I succeeded only too well if fate keeps them forever from France, which I tried to make dear to their hearts.

Madame Campan also took great pains to form her pupils' character. She founded a good conduct prize, consisting of an artificial rose, to be worn on Sundays by the girl who received the most votes. Everyone, pupils, teachers, servants, cast a ballot. No one wished to compete against me for this prize and it was known in advance that I was to receive it. It was awarded me as expected.

This incident, the tears of joy it provoked, the enthusiasm it aroused produced on me one of the deepest and most agreeable sensations I ever experienced. Three months later another election was held. The discussions that went on about it set the boarding school humming. Among the four candidates for the rose was a young lady possessing many natural gifts, but inclined to be headstrong and willful; the hope of winning the prize had in a few weeks made her the most agreeable and obliging of us all.

Her rival, my cousin Emilie de Beauharnais, had to make no effort whatsoever in order to please. Her kind disposition endeared her to everyone but the question arose as to which was the more deserving of the two, she who can overcome her faults or she who simply follows the dictates of her nature. The question was debated with all that earnestness and passion which youth can command, and the day of the election might have proved a day of conflict had not Madame Campan, in order to satisfy both parties, divided the spray into two parts and named two prize winners in stead of one.

On this important issue I remained neutral. It would have been too natural for me to vote for my cousin. While my schooldays passed thus quietly and calmly, the only incidents being such as I have just related, important events were taking place in the outside world.

The peace of Campo Formio had just been signed. Family affairs obliged my grandfather and his wife to stay in Paris. He wished to see me again. It had been a long while since I had been away from Saint Germain.

As I drove at nightfall across that square, where so many people had perished, the memory of my father, the thought of his tragic death rose before me. I wept silently, sitting in the back of the coach. I should have been ashamed to have others notice my emotion. Always I have attempted to keep my feelings to myself. I believe the deeper they are the more one restrains them. I had only been staying for a few days with my grandfather, when General Bonaparte arrived from Italy.

Paris rang with his name. Everyone sought to catch a glimpse of him in order to admire him. He lived at my mother's house in the rue Chantereine, which was promptly rechristened rue de la Victoire.

One morning my grandfather took us, my cousin and myself, to see him. What a change had come over our little home that formerly was so quiet. Now it was filled with generals and officers. The sentinels had difficulty in keeping back a crowd made up of all classes of people, impatient and eager to catch sight of the conqueror of Italy. Finally, in spite of the throng we managed to reach the General. He was having breakfast surrounded by a numerous staff. He greeted us as affectionately as a father might have done, gave me news of my brother whom he had sent to Zante, to Corfu, to Cephalonia and to Rome with the news of the signing of the peace treaty, and told me that mother would be home soon.

A few days later I did, as a matter of fact, have the pleasure of seeing her again and of going to live with her. She enjoyed telling me about her travels: how the troops of General Wurmser had fired on her carriage near Mantua how General Bonaparte when he heard of this had declared, "Wurmser will pay dearly for having frightened you"; and how shortly afterwards new victories had confirmed his threats. I remember also that in telling me about the honors she had received in Italy she spoke of a prophecy an old negress in Martinique had made before she was married about her future.

After announcing she would marry twice a long way from home and would have two children by her first husband, the fortuneteller had added, "Your second marriage will make you more than a queen. But beware of a priest who wishes you ill." My mother pointed out that the first part of the prophecy, which she had forgotten until now, had come true, as the successes of the French armies in Italy had made her more than a queen.

She never guessed these successes would carry her still higher. Nevertheless, the latter part of the prediction frightened her in spite of herself, and she admitted she was very nervous when she saw a priest too intimate with her husband.

Monsieur de Talleyrand, at that time Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave a great reception in honor of General Bonaparte. My mother took me with her to the party, and it was there I first saw Madame de Staél. She kept following the General about all the time, boring him to a point where he could not, and perhaps did not, sufficiently attempt to hide his annoyance."

It was at this ball that when she asked him, "Whom do you consider the greatest woman in the world, past or present?" Bonaparte answered with a smile, "The one who has had the most children."

Mother was naturally obliged to go out a great deal. I preferred not to accompany her and spent my evenings at my grandfather's house where I should be sure of seeing my cousin and the Mesdemoiselles Auguié.

Louis Bonaparte, who returned to Paris ahead of the General, also enjoyed our company. He came to see us often and seemed particularly interested in me. For some inexplicable reason I was afraid of him and took pleasure in convincing my cousin that it was on her account he called so often.

Joseph Bonaparte now arrived in Paris with Julie, his wife, his sister Caroline Bonaparte, and his wife's sister Desiree Clary. My brother, whose special mission was completed, accompanied them.

He had been a mere lad when he left and he came back a man. I looked up to him as my natural protector. I had expected to find a real friend in Caroline Bonaparte.

She was about my age, and I had no doubt that our characters would be congenial. It was the General's fault if this did not take place. He too frequently held me up to his sister as a model and was too anxious to impress her with such natural gifts as I happened to possess. But what especially upset her was the idea of becoming a pupil at Madame Campan's boarding school.

In vain I pointed out that no existence could be more agreeable than the busy days we spent at Saint Germain, that the pleasures we found there were quite as great as anything Paris had to offer. I was not able to prove my case. Caroline was already used to society and enjoyed it. Yet in spite of her tears she had to obey the General.

I took a great deal of trouble to make her first moments at school as pleasant as possible. I blamed the fact of her being backward in her studies on her having traveled a great deal. I made much of what knowledge she possessed and retouched her drawings so that she might win a prize. But I failed in my efforts to make her like me. Indeed, she went so far as to bring unjust accusations against me.

She told the General I was always showing off at her expense, that it was I who was responsible for the petty humiliations her fellow pupils inflicted on her. Wounded by these undeserved attacks, I demanded that she explain her attitude. She did so with a frankness that disarmed me.

She admitted her injustice, confessed she was in love with Colonel Murat, and vowed she was prepared to employ every means in her power to be taken out of school and brought back to Paris. Touched by her confession I forgave her, and from that moment on we became friends. The expedition to Egypt was in course of preparation but General Bonaparte before his departure wished to arrange the marriage of my cousin Emilie de Beauharnais.

The latter was as beautiful and sweet as an angel. A thousand personal charms in addition to her position made her a most desirable match.

The General offered her hand to General Marmont, who only declined because she was the daughter of an émigré.

Monsieur Lavalette was eligible on account of his ability and his highly honorable character. He was distinguished in mind and manner if not in looks. General Bonaparte suggested this marriage to him and he accepted.

One day he appeared at Saint Germain as escort to the General and my mother. We were at luncheon. As it happened one of the girls was in disgrace, a thing that very rarely occurred. Her punishment consisted in being obliged to sit at a separate table without a table cloth.

Imagine what a terrible mortification it was for the poor girl to be found thus by the conqueror of Italy. The General put an end to the ordeal in a few minutes by asking for and obtaining the culprit's pardon. The victim of this tragic occurrence was Mademoiselle Zoe Talon, later Madame du Cayla (mistress of Louis XVIII).

The General inspected the whole school. He asked about the various courses of study, gave his opinion as to what subjects were the most important for women, in short devoted the same serious care and attention to these matters which concerned only a few little girls as I have since seen him give to problems of great importance. Madame Campan was impressed by the aptness of his remarks.

Caroline, my cousin and I accompanied the visitors for a drive in the forest of Saint Germain. They had brought a cold meal with them in their carriage, and we dined on the grass. Monsieur Lavalette was very attentive to my cousin, and the marriage took place a week before the departure of the expedition to Egypt.

It was celebrated very simply at my grandfather's house. Caroline and I were present. After the ceremony it seemed to me that my cousin looked sad. The idea occurred to me that perhaps the match was not to her liking. I spoke to her with tender solicitude, and she finally admitted that she was in love with Louis Bonaparte."

I was both surprised and grieved at this tardy confession and at my helplessness to modify a step which had been definitely taken. I was convinced that had she spoken earlier, I, acting through mother, could have broken off the engagement.

Her grief touched me all the more keenly since marriage to a man you did not love seemed to me the most terrible fate imaginable. My mother accompanied her husband and my brother as far as Toulon whence they were to sail for Egypt.

From Toulon she went to Plombieres while waiting for the time when she could follow them. A fall came near costing her her life.

She was standing with some other persons on a balcony when the planks gave way and she fell twenty feet to the pavement. Thinking she was about to die she sent for me at Saint Germain. I arrived at once, and my tender care restored her to health.

Toward the close of our stay at Plombieres people spoke enthusiastically of the approaching arrival of Director Reubell and his two sons. Someone praised them in my presence and did so rather pointedly, watching my expression meanwhile. I felt very self-conscious.

Too young to marry I was annoyed at the very idea that a man who might not be to my liking could consider the possibility of becoming my husband. "They hold the highest rank in France," I said to myself, "consequently there is no social difference between us, but I could never consider such a match.

My dream is to enter an old, well established family where I will find solid happiness rather than glittering display.

All this pretentiousness has something cheap about it that displeases me." Yet I could not help thinking about these young men of whom I had heard so many agreeable things. The few novels I had been allowed to read had taught me love may come suddenly.

Without having pictured it in my mind I feared its approach. I had promised myself I would not give my heart to anyone except the man I was destined to marry. I fought in advance against the emotion I thought I might feel stir in me. I tried in all sorts of ways to avoid the threatened danger.

Finally, I decided that when the Reubells were introduced I would only notice their faults. In due time they called on my mother. I cannot describe the turmoil of my emotions, but it did not last.

A girl's imagination pictures perfection. The image she forms in her mind surpasses reality to such an extent that when she meets a man who is merely average, he seems hopelessly commonplace. Consequently, I found nothing especially interesting about these gentlemen. I laughed at my terrors, and they benefited by the indifference they aroused. All of General Bonaparte's family were now in Paris. Lucien, a member of the Council of the Five Hundred, had quarreled with all his relatives on account of his un-suitable marriage. [He married Catherine Boyer, daughter of an innkeeper at Saint-Maximien, May 4, 1794. None of his family attended the wedding.]

My mother succeeded in reconciling him with General Bonaparte, and his wife was so nice that everyone ended by receiving her and liking her.

General Bernadotte married Desiree Clary, the sister of Madame Joseph Bonaparte. All these persons kept by themselves, living very quietly and seeing my mother only occasionally.

About this time, she purchased the estate known as Malmaison, which she improved and where she stayed while waiting for the General's return.

I spent one day each week with her, and she complained to me about the attitude of the Bonaparte family. Louis, for instance, when he came back from Egypt had been in no hurry to go and see her, and this upset her.

I experienced a serious shock about this time when I received word that my brother had been wounded during the attack on Saint Jean d'Acre. A shell had exploded in the midst of the General's staff, a fragment striking Eugene in the head and rendering him unconscious. It was thought at first he had been killed.

The same day Colonel Duroc was seriously wounded, and General Bonaparte himself was in great danger. He had been saved by a sergeant (later General Daumesnil) in the quartermaster corps of a regiment of the Guides. This man threw himself between a shell and the General, seized the latter and covered him with his own body.

The General, overcome at the sight of my brother's wound, had not been aware of the risk he was exposing himself to. At last General Bonaparte disembarked at Frejus at the moment when he was least expected [October 9, 1799].

So great was the enthusiasm that the entire population hastened toward the vessel which brought him to port, climbed aboard and broke all the rules of quarantine.

France at that moment was so wretched that all arms stretched out to the General appealing for aid. All put their hopes in him. I left Paris with my mother to meet the returning soldier.

We went through Burgundy. In every city, every village, triumphal arches had been erected. When we stopped to change horses, the people would gather around our coach to ask whether it was really true that their savior, for that was the name by which all France called the General, had returned.

With Italy lost, the finances exhausted, the Directorate helpless and regarded with contempt, this arrival of the General was considered a Heaven sent miracle.

His progress was marked by continuous ovations. It showed him, and at the same time proved to his enemies, what great things France expected of him.

Hardly had the General reached Paris when all political parties sought him out. All were eager to change the form of government and wished to have his precious help in doing so. It was at Chalon sur Saone that mother and I heard he had traveled up by another route, through the Bourbonnais. He was already in Paris when we arrived there.

Following the General's return Caroline and I stayed in Paris till the 16th Brumaire. On that date he suddenly sent us back to Saint Germain. My mother begged that we stay a few more days with her, but he refused.

Little did we guess what was to happen on the morrow. But on the night of the 19th Brumaire General Murat, in true soldier-lover fashion, sent us four grenadiers of the Guard, of which he was the commander, to tell us the news.

It was from them we learned what had taken place at Saint Cloud, and that General Bonaparte had been nominated Consul. Imagine the effect of four grenadiers knocking on the doors of a convent in the middle of the night. Everyone was terrified. Madame Campan disapproved of such a cavalier method of conduct, but Caroline considered it a sign of affection.

CHAPTER III

AT THE PALACE OF THE TUILERIES AND THE CHATEAU OF THE MALMAISON (1799-1801)

Wedding of Caroline Bonaparte—Thoughts on Love and Marriage—Hortense's Suitors—"The Plague Victims at Jaffa"—Home-Life of the First Consul—Plots and Plotters—The Explosion in the Rue Saint-Nicaise—At Malmaison—Various Visitors—Mademoiselle Clairon—More Sentimental Complications—Duroc's Letter and Bourrienne's Tears—A Fire in the Tuileries—The King and Queen of Etruria at Malmaison—The Peace of Amiens.

FOLLOWING the revolution that took place on the 18th Brumaire, the Consul moved into the Palace of the Luxembourg and devoted himself entirely to affairs of state.

My mother's first concern was to secure permission from him for the return of a number of political exiles. Naturally her drawing room was crowded daily with members of the oldest families of France, some of whose relatives had sought shelter abroad.

Later they would return accompanied by a father, a husband or a brother eager to express his gratitude toward the person who had enabled him once more to look upon his native land.

My mother, who had had me recalled from school and kept me with her, was constantly introducing me to relatives whom I had never heard of before. The number of the latter speedily became so great that it was easy to surmise we owed this increase in our family to our new rank.

My mother took me to a ball at the house of Monsieur de Perigord, the brother of Monsieur de Talleyrand. The host's name had until quite recently figured on the list of refugees. The guests at his ball consisted entirely of those who had shared his misfortunes and a part of the nobility who had survived the horrors of the Revolution. It was there that I for the first time saw Monsieur de Mun, Monsieur de Gontaut, Monsieur de Nitlai, Monsieur de Noailles, and Monsieur de Choiseul Praslin, who one after the other became my suitors.

I admit their manners pleased me although I was most critical in that respect, but I wished to have an opportunity to become acquainted with their real characters and above all to make sure they were marrying me for myself alone. As a matter of fact, I was too young to consider matrimony and would have been glad to return to Saint Germain.

The idle life I led at the Luxembourg bored me and became quite unbearable when my mother began to talk seriously to me about Monsieur de Mun. He was enormously wealthy, already the master of his fortune and, according to reports, deeply in love with me. I was willing enough to admit all his advantages.

What I declined to believe was his affection. I thought, "He has had no opportunity to know me and he says he loves me. Either he is of a shallow nature, or it is the daughter of the First Consul he wishes to marry out of ambition or vanity."

This idea caused me to avoid him with the utmost care. He never had a chance to speak to me, and at last, after I had begged for it repeatedly, I was allowed to return to Saint Germain.

My mother sometimes spoke to the First Consul about my marriage. He had little to say on the subject. At that time, he sought to marry his brothers and sisters either to the most distinguished families belonging to the old nobility, in order to attach the latter to the new regime, or else to generals whose abilities and skill had secured France her latest glories.

He replied to my mother that my extreme youth allowed me to take my time, and that undoubtedly in due course a suitably brilliant match could be arranged. His two eldest sisters had disappointed his matrimonial projects. Elisa had chosen, instead of General Berthier, a young Corsican named Bacciochi.

Although of good family, honest and kind, he did not come up to the Consul's wishes. His second sister Pauline had selected General Leclerc and Caroline, the third sister, announced openly her affection for General Murat.

None of these alliances pleased the Consul. It was a long while before he gave his consent to that of Caroline and Murat. He signed the contract with reluctance and would not attend the ceremony.

The annoyance it caused him led to his saying one day to Madame Campan, "I hope at least this one" (pointing to me) "will let herself be married properly."

At one time he had thought of marrying his sister to General Duroc, whom he esteemed highly. Neither she nor the General paid any attention to his wishes. Caroline's wedding took place at Mortefontaine.

I was present. It afforded me food for thought. Here were two people who seemed to have achieved complete felicity, since the love of her husband is the only perfect happiness within a woman's grasp.

Yet can such happiness be complete when our parents disapprove of the choice we have made? Could I experience a happiness my mother did not share?

On the other hand, to be led to the altar blindly, to approach it in a spirit of obedience, to surrender oneself without love, this was a sacrifice more cruel than anything I was prepared to endure. Therefore, I hoped to be able to satisfy both the dictates of my heart and the wishes of my family.

To achieve this, I resolved to examine attentively, but in such a way as not to attract attention, all those men who sought to please me and who succeeded so poorly in their attempts. It was to be sure rather presumptuous on the part of a young lady of sixteen to imagine she could grasp almost at a glance secrets which often escape mature and long continued scrutiny. I fancied that a single word or gesture frequently revealed a person's nature.

All I had to do would be to seize that word and note that gesture. My arts were vain. Nothing that I saw or heard touched my heart. Doubtless I demanded too much. I sought the sublime, the unattainable, but the very loftiness of my ambitions, since it made their realization impossible, assured my peace of mind.

Paris was coming to life again. Balls, receptions and general rejoicings followed the end of the Reign of Terror. Yet the social tone of the old regime had disappeared.

France's wealth had changed hands. Now it was to be found in the pockets of tradespeople, and it was they who entertained, who showed visitors the sights of the city, who squandered in a single night's entertainment a fortune they had acquired too easily.

Foreigners flocked to Paris. They were curious to see what France was like after such political upheavals and had confidence in the new order. The only drawing rooms these visitors entered were those of these nouveaux riches. There they obtained their ideas regarding French society and on returning home filled their newsheets with erroneous opinions.

All this time France was prosperous. The government was being organized. Public works were undertaken on a vast scale. The luxury which is a necessary part of the life of every great nation reappeared.

The First Consul in order to revive the factories of Lyons, and to free us from paying tribute to England, forbade the wearing of muslin materials and ordered the destruction of all English manufactured goods. When my mother or I would come into the room wearing an elegant dress his first question was, "Is that gown made of muslin?" Frequently we would say that it was linen from Saint Quentin, but if a smile betrayed the fact that we were not telling the truth, he would tear off the guilty garment.

This unpleasant incident having been repeated on several occasions we were obliged to revert to satin or velvet. The decrees of fashion carried out what those of the Consul might not have otherwise achieved, but cashmere shawls, in spite of being frequently threatened with destruction, continued to be worn.

The Consul was so uncomfortably housed in the Palace of the Luxembourg that he moved to that of the Tuileries.

Perhaps too he was anxious to live in the house of the former rulers of France. I can recall my mother's melancholy the first few days of our residence at the Tuileries. She kept imagining she saw poor Queen Marie Antoinette.

I had the same impression on account of the vivid reminiscences of Madame Campan. My mother made a remark which saddened me. "I shall never be happy here," she said to me. "I felt gloomy forebodings from the first minute I entered."

I attempted to cheer her but did not succeed. Social activities and especially the good she was able to do others triumphed where my efforts failed. No matter how much I might dislike what are known as "suitable" marriages everyone seemed to be proposing matches of that description.

All the old dowagers of the Faubourg Saint Germain devoted themselves to the task with indefatigable zeal. Among others Madame de Montesson, who had taken a great fancy to me, suggested one day I should marry the Duc d'Arenberg.

Another time it was the leader of the Chouans [the royalist rebels] who wished to make his peace with the government and my hand was to serve as security.

Several young nobles who had lost their estates through expropriation by the government hoped to get them back if they married me, while at the same time several generals also appeared as candidates.

Macdonald [later the hero of the Battle of Wagram] was among the latter. To him the First Consul replied that he intended I should marry some young man whom I could love, not a person almost old enough to be my father.

This reply relieved my mind since it showed he cared about my happiness. It wiped out the unpleasant impression caused by a talk I had had a few days before with my brother. When I pictured what I considered would be a happy future he had said to me, "Hortense, my dear, do not cherish false illusions. The more we rise in rank, the less we become free agents. I think you will have to marry in accordance with the wishes of the Consul, perhaps to suit his political plans. Forget your dreams of an impossible bliss."

My mother, who treated me more as a friend than a daughter, kept me informed of the various proposals. As a matter of fact it was easy to guess what was going on. Mornings I liked to spend in my own apartment. Every few minutes mother would send for me. I would have to bring out my drawings and have them admired.

Among the visitors there would be a young man who would look at me particularly intently. It was easy to guess what that meant, and every day I became more and more annoyed about it. Once an elderly lady called at the Tuileries. Mother was out. The visitor asked to see me and talked to me at great length about Monsieur de Mun, praising him to the skies. The more I kept insisting I would never marry him, that I could never care for him, the more persistently she sought to persuade me to change my mind, or at least think the matter over. Remembering her influence on my mother I foresaw more worries in the future and unable to bear the prospect gave way to tears. "So, you have absolutely made up your mind not to marry Monsieur de Mun?" she repeated. "Oh, absolutely!" I replied. "Well, I am delighted to hear it," she went on. "I called on your mother especially to suggest another husband for you, one who I am sure would please you very much better."

This remark made me burst out laughing as much at this novel manner of proposing a fiancé as at the tears I had just been shedding so needlessly.

Constantly I was called upon to repulse new attacks. My hand seemed to be everybody's property. People seemed to think they could do what they pleased with it, and to mask the real reasons for this assiduity paid me all sorts of fantastic compliments.

I had not attempted to hide my grief at the time of my mother's marriage; therefore, people supposed that my sympathies were with the old regime.

It was said the First Consul called me his little rebel, that one day I had dared tell him the uniform of commander of the royal forces would be more becoming to him than his badge of office.

In short people took for granted I shared their views and opinions. Consequently, at that time I had the rare good fortune of pleasing everyone. My mother enjoyed the sight of my social success, but I was mortified at being so much under observation from all sides.

I complained of it to her and begged to be allowed to go back and spend one more year at Saint Germain. Finally, she agreed.

The public was touched that I should prefer life in a boarding school where I was merely one of the pupils to that of a palace, considering the latter a center of gaiety and pleasure.

As a matter of fact, my real joys were to be found at Saint Germain. There I was liked for myself only. Affection inspired whatever praise I received, praise which was dearer to me than any offered me in Paris since the latter was so obviously prompted by self-interest.

In spite of this my mother was dissatisfied with my absence. Before six days had elapsed, she sent for me. My departure had made her weep, and she chided me gently with being happy away from her and preferring the companionship of my friends to what she had to offer.

The Consul, who came in while this scene was taking place, laughed at her reproaches and in fun tried to arouse her still more, saying, "Do you think you had children to please yourself? What a mistake! The moment boys and girls have grown up they no longer need their parents. When Hortense is married, she will care only for her husband and pay no attention at all to you."

I protested but he continued, "Children always love their parents less than their parents love them. That is a law of nature. Look at young birds. As soon as they can fly they leave the nest and never return."

Tears fell from my mother's eyes. Seeing this he took her on his knees, kissed her, and in a tone that was half jesting, half serious said, "Poor little woman, who is so unhappy. She has a husband who cares only for her, and that isn't enough. It is I who ought to make a scene, for you are far fonder of your children than you are of me." "No," replied my mother, with a smile, "you cannot doubt my affection,

but I cannot be wholly happy if my children are not with me."

"What more do you need to make you happy?" asked the Consul. "You have a husband who is no worse than the average, two children who are in every way a credit to you. Surely you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth."

"You're right," she replied, and joy followed the tears. Several such discussions having taken place, I realized that it was necessary to wait for my mother herself to suggest that I return to Saint Germain.

Several days passed, she said nothing, and I remained finally with her. My apartment, which was very small, was next to my mother's dressing room.

In order not to waste my time I had selected several teachers. The First Consul said to me severely, "Are you studying English?"

"Yes," I answered, somewhat dismayed by the tone in which he spoke.

"Dismiss your teacher." "But he seems very good."

"I tell you to dismiss him. He is a spy."

"That can't be true."

"Do as I say. You are nothing but a child and do not understand these things."

I was silent, convinced this was a piece of slander and that so despicable a trade could not be carried on by such an honest looking man.

Moreover, what could he hope to find out from me? The incident annoyed me, for I believed I was committing an injustice. I declined to take another teacher for fear of offending the one I had dismissed, and I gave up studying English.

My brother left for the front with his regiment.

The Consul followed him shortly afterwards, executing that wonderful crossing of the Alps and winning the Battle of Marengo, thus further increasing the passionate admiration which he already aroused in France. My readers can imagine for themselves the anxiety through which we passed and the joy we felt when the Consul wrote, saying my brother had distinguished himself.

While they were away, we lived at La Malmaison and all the young men of the Faubourg Saint Germain called there assiduously.

My marriage began to be spoken of again. There could no longer be any question of Monsieur de Mun, as my mother realized, but Monsieur de Gontaut, an agreeable looking youth, younger brother of the Due de Biron, was ready to take his place as candidate. He was only nineteen and I did not dislike him. Yet when I watched his boyish pranks, his silly antics and remembered that a husband should be his wife's counselor and support I could not help wondering if such light-heartedness was compatible with the serious business of life.

Finally, one day I discovered him rolling on the floor while he played with my mother's little dog. That settled the question. The return of the First Consul interrupted these various matrimonial projects.

He came back much depressed by the death of General Desaix. One evening as he was speaking to my mother about the General tears stood in his eyes. "What a fine man! What a loss to our country! I intended him for Hortense. With him she would have been happy. I regret him deeply."

My mother noted with pleasure these moments when this brilliant man, too frequently accused of lacking emotion, gave way to his feelings.

"People do not know Napoleon," she would say. "He is quick tempered, but kind. If he did not seek to suppress these outbursts of feeling, which he considers signs of weakness, people would understand him better."

One day as we were standing at a window of the Tuileries the Consul noticed a man, decently dressed, who in a deprecating manner was asking the passers-by for alms. He sent Eugene out to him with some money. We watched with interest to see the effect this gift would have on the old man. His joy was so great that the Consul exclaimed, "How little it takes to satisfy him. Let us make him entirely happy." Immediately the old man was brought in, the First Consul questioned him regarding his needs and how he had fallen into poverty, paid him a considerable sum of money and promised him his protection.

About this time I had a bad cold. To keep warm, I had made myself a turban out of muslin. The Consul said to me "Did we bring the fashion of wearing turbans back from Egypt with us? If so, I can give you some strips of cashmere so that you can make yourself a real one."

He called his servant and asked, "Have I still the red, white and blue waistband that was made for me in Egypt?"

"Yes, General," answered Ambart. "Then go and get it. I wore it at the Battle of the Pyramids," he went on turning to my mother, "so it has been somewhat blackened by the smoke, and it had a close view of the plague. Take it, Hortense," he added, when it had been brought to him.

"Don't be frightened of it, and may it prove becoming." As I had often heard my stepfather and his companions speak of his visit to the plague victims at Jaffa it occurred to me that the incident might make an effective painting.

Gros, who had just come back from Italy, happened to be at the Tuilleries one morning. I mentioned my idea to him. He approved of it and made a picture that has remained of his finest works. It was shown at the Salon."

One morning my brother came in very cross with the painter for having drawn the General's aides-de-camp holding their handkerchiefs in front of their mouths. "I know better than anyone else what took place at Jaffa," he said, "because I was there with the other aides-de-camp. We certainly did not feel comfortable. But would we have dared show our nervousness on an occasion when the General, in order to reassure the troops, displayed such courage and exposed himself as he did?"

I had considerable difficulty in proving to my brother that since painting was only an approximation of reality, a picture could only express an idea from a certain angle. In this case in order to indicate the courage of the principal figure the painter had been obliged to suggest a different feeling on the part of the others and sacrifice them in this respect. All the other aides-de-camp shared my brother's just indignation, and I had trouble pacifying them, and making them accept the idea of artistic convention.

The First Consul was entirely absorbed by his work. He rested neither day nor night, and everything else was subordinated to it.

Bedtime and mealtime were equally irregular, and he seemed able to do without sleep or food. He always lunched alone. We saw him only at dinner. If he happened to come downstairs earlier and my mother was still dressing, he enjoyed teasing her or criticizing the way she did her hair.

He would take off the flowers she was wearing, put them back differently, insist that this new way was much more becoming than the way the hairdresser had arranged them, and call on me to testify what good taste he had. All this with a most comically serious manner.

Days when he had something on his mind he would come in looking serious, sit down in a big armchair in front of the fireplace or walk about the room without paying attention to anyone. "Not ready yet?" would be his only remark. Dinner took place in silence. It lasted ten minutes. Sometimes he even left the table before the dessert had been served. My mother would point this out to him. He would smile, sit down a moment and then leave us immediately without having said a word.

When he was in a humor like this everyone was afraid of him. No one ventured to interrupt his thoughts for fear of disturbing him and receiving a harsh rebuff. We would say to each other, "He is in a bad temper today. Has any-thing new happened?"

After having tried to find out what the trouble might be we would not know after all. We went to the theater fairly often. The plays the Consul liked best were tragedies by Corneille and Racine. He only went to the Opera because we enjoyed it.

The day of the first performance of "Dansomanie" my brother, who had told us he would not be dining at the Tuileries, appeared about six o'clock accompanied by all the other aides-de-camp.

I was surprised and told him so. He informed me that there was a plot to assassinate the First Consul at the play that night and that the latter intended to go in order to seize the conspirators red-handed. All measures had been taken to insure my step-father's safety, but as a further safeguard his aides-de-camp were going with him.

Eugene begged me not to say a word to anyone, especially not to our mother, whose alarm would interfere with the Consul's plans. Imagine my terror up to the moment when, entering the Opera, I saw everything was as quiet as usual. The conspirators had hired the box just over ours. They planned to assassinate the First Consul either when he came in or as he was going out, but they were arrested while the performance was going on.

They were tried and convicted. They were Jacobins, called Ceracchi, Arena, etc., and one of their accomplices had betrayed them shortly before the attempt was to be made. Another plot was made to kill the Consul at the theater by shooting him with a sort of perfected pea shooter.

I had heard of the plot and during the entire performance, as I sat between my mother and the Consul, I kept casting nervous glances all around the audience. Every time a man took out his handkerchief I wondered if the fatal missile was not about to be aimed at our box.

Yet one speedily becomes accustomed to every danger. The failure of several attempts of this kind gave us a feeling of perfect security. But this did not last. For some time, people had been talking about an oratorio by Haydn, the music of which was supposed to be remarkably fine. The day of the performance arrived," and we were preparing to go to the opera house where it was to be given.

The Consul, who had sat down after dinner by the fire, did not seem inclined to go out. We were all dressed and waited impatiently for him to make up his mind. My mother urged him to come. "It will amuse you; you are working too hard."

The Consul shut his eyes and made no reply. Finally, he said we could go, but he was staying in the house. My mother wanted to keep him company, and an argument ensued which ended by orders being given to have the carriages brought to the door.

A moment before stepping into his carriage the Consul found fault with my mother's dress," and we owed our life to this remark.

She wished to repeat it to Caroline and the aide-de-camp and thus lost a few minutes. Consequently, our carriage instead of being as usual immediately behind that of the Consul was some little distance away. As we entered the rue Saint Nicaise we felt a violent shock.

The carriage seemed to be blown away. The glass in the window broke and fell on us. "It's an attempt to kill Bonaparte," exclaimed my mother, and fainted. Our horses, terrified at the noise, suffocated by the powder, reared and taking the bits in their teeth dashed back with us to the Tuileries.

Caroline, although she was about to have a child," remained cool and attempted to reassure my mother. She had seen a mass of flame. A house had fallen down. It could not be a plot against her brother. But my mother kept repeating over and over, "It's an attempt to kill Bonaparte."

I tried to calm her to the best of my ability. I explained to her that it was our carriage that had been attacked, that the violence of the shock we had experienced proved this and that the mistake had saved the Consul. A piece of glass had slightly wounded my hand.

Rapp had dashed into the rue Saint Nicaise. There he caught sight of men, women and children wounded or dying or with shattered limbs, and ruins that threatened to crash down upon him. But the cries of the victims did not check his course. He sought to rejoin the Consul and yet feared to find him. One of the soldiers of the escort who had been sent to meet us relieved our apprehension with the news that the explosion had only occurred as the Consul was leaving the rue Saint Nicaise and that he had arrived safely at the Opera.

We proceeded thither by another route. My mother was unable to dissemble her emotion when she caught sight of her husband, but he, calm and untroubled, sought to quiet her fears. "What is the matter?" he asked.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing very serious." His whole manner was as placid as though he did not know there had been another attempt made on his life. Rapp arrived and described the horrors of the rue Saint Nicaise, through which he had just passed.

The Prefect of Police and General Junot, Military Governor of Paris, presented their reports as they secured further details of this terrible episode. The Consul listened in silence, but when he heard the number of persons whose bodies had been found near the cart loaded with powder (which had served as an infernal machine) he exclaimed in tones of anguish, "How ghastly to cause the death of so many people's in seeking to do away with a single man!"

The news of what had taken place began to spread through the audience. Alarm and curiosity had already caused a number of the spectators to leave the theater, and my mother's agitated appearance indicated clearly that something extraordinary had happened.

Finally, the performance was over, and we returned to the Tuileries. There we found assembled all the government authorities and leading citizens of Paris. I listened to their discussion. Each suggested which hostile political party he believed capable of committing such an outrage. The Consul and the ministers of state accused the Jacobins.

Fouché was alone in his belief that the blow had been struck by the royalists but failed to convince his hearers. Indeed, how could one suspect that men who had so loudly protested against the use of violence could be guilty of such an act? Were they trying to resemble those upon whom they had showered scorn and reproaches?

A little later the Consul's coachman (who was drunk that night) came in while we were at dinner and gave the following details: One of his friends had rented a stable to some unknown man. They kept a cart there which they came often to look at. The day the explosion took place they had taken away the cart and never reappeared.

While drinking at a public house he had secured this information, which when added to what the Minister of Police secured furnished the necessary clues. There was no possibility of doubting that it was the royalists who had hatched and executed this plot.

I did not enjoy in the least the life I led at the Tuileries. I should have preferred to live in the country. Malmaison was a charming spot and I was delighted when we went there for a few days, although even then I could not enjoy it in the same way I did when I was alone there.

On such occasions I was able to take long walks through the park, but at other times, when the house was filled with men, these strolls would not have been proper. I was well aware of the fact, and here again the good advice I had received from Madame Campan, which always meant so much to me, taught me what to avoid.

The Consul's habits were much the same at Malmaison as in Paris. He invariably worked all the morning alone with his ministers. Scientists were invited to dinner; they stayed afterwards, spending the rest of the evening, and the Consul enjoyed their conversation. Those I saw the most frequently were Monge, Berthollet, Fourcroy, Volney, Laplace, Lagrange and Prony.

Those who were married came with their wives. Lemercier also came to Malmaison several times and read us his tragedies. Of them all the Emperor seemed to prefer Monge best as a man, and he never broke off relations with him entirely. He even suggested later on that I have him as tutor for my children. Volney came to see us only during the Consulate, but then he came often.

He was highly esteemed by all the persons who had taken part in the expedition to Egypt. They considered that his account of his travels in that country was the only accurate one and that the descriptions given by another author called Savary were not true. Volney was a rigid believer in republican ideals. He always came and sat next to me at the table, asked me questions about Saint Germain, enjoyed hearing me give my views upon life and seemed to approve of them.

In those days I did not realize how eminent these distinguished men were. My only recollections of them are very trivial conversations and remarks such as youth could readily understand. For instance, the thing I remember about Volney is that whenever he sat beside me he would insist on my not eating too much bread. He said it was not nourishing and made the chyle too thick. I believe it was the word "chyle," which I had never heard pronounced before, that made me remember the distinguished

scientist.

I learned later that his fidelity to republicanism caused him to see less of us during the Empire. The Emperor never resented this. He respected all opinions as long as they were honest and sincere, and I recall having seen him very much upset in 1812 or 1813 on hearing of an accident that had happened to Volney.

The scientist had been walking along quietly when a bull suddenly charged him and tossed him some distance into a field. I also saw the Emperor distressed by the news that Monsieur de Lafayette (who like Volney avoided us) had broken his leg on the ice as he was coming out from a ball."

The Consul was always anxious to meet and surround himself with eminent men of all kinds. I have never understood why people said he was jealous of others. On the contrary I always felt that he sought to honor in every respect those whose achievements added to the glory of France.

The only thing he would not consent to share was his political authority. He considered that this was indispensable to insure the success of his vast plans and the best interests of his country. Therefore, he would not share it or allow it to be weakened.

Moreover, the enthusiasm of the crowd, the esteem and consideration shown him by everyone he encountered proved his superiority. He seemed born to command other men.

I have always seen him the same, as General, Consul and Emperor. His generals never spoke to him familiarly. Neither Lannes, Berthier, Augereau, nor Lefebvre ever sat down in his presence. He impressed them even more than he did others with a sense of his personal preeminence of which they were all conscious.

A difference in rank has always been considered respectfully in France. I have seen Lannes, Bessieres, Murat furiously angry, jealous of each other and talking of leaving the Consul's service because, according to them, he had treated them unfairly in the way of promotion.

Frequently I managed to reconcile them, but whether or not I did so the moment General Bonaparte appeared no one said another word. Sometimes they would have a sullen air if their pride had been too deeply wounded.

The General, always aware of what was going on, guessed their thoughts and by an abrupt phrase or a gentle pull of the ear made the insurgent as meek as he had just been the contrary.

Scientists seemed more at their ease with the Consul, for he always allowed them to speak their minds freely. But they remained standing in front of him, following his remarks with avidity and a sort of admiration. I am sure that the authority the Emperor wielded was due to the fact that all those who spoke to him felt he was superior to anyone else in his intelligence and that since it is necessary to have a ruler no one was better qualified than he.

The Consul had so great a respect for all forms of learning that if a distinguished man did not come to see him he would find time, in spite of his many duties, to visit the scholar.

One day he went out for a drive with my mother and myself. We went to the Jardin des Plantes to call on Daubenton, the naturalist, who lived in a little pavilion giving on the garden. He seemed very, very old as he sat in a large armchair, but in spite of his advanced years spoke with great animation. The General asked him many questions about Buffon. I have always been sorry I did not keep a letter the General received from Beaumarchais after his return from Italy. I might have done so easily enough. The letter was so flattering and so well written that he read it aloud to my mother and me.

At that time he was receiving so much praise, including expressions of such a fulsome variety, that I could not help noticing what was said with wit and moderation. The compliments Beaumarchais paid him struck me as being in the best of taste, but that letter like so many others was burned.

In the days of the Republic, when polite social life was completely destroyed, the republicans wished to have the upper classes adopt the manners and habits of the mob. Under the Consulate, on the other hand, the Consul in bringing the different strata of society together, sought to introduce into what had formerly been exclusive circles people of worth and distinction without regard for their origin.

So deeply are aristocratic traditions rooted in France among all classes that the enterprise was far from easy. Nevertheless, he attempted it.

He went so far as to invite to dinner at Malmaison some famous actors. I saw there, one after another, Talma, Mademoiselle Raucourt, Mademoiselle Contat, Mademoiselle Fleury, all distinguished artists and possessing excellent manners. But people took offense, and so strong is the force of prejudice it was quite as much the newly enriched commoners who objected as the old nobility.

On the other hand, one day at the Tuileries the Consul invited to his table two old soldiers, one of whom was over a hundred years of age. I remember it was a dinner attended by the members of the first mission from Russia. One of the young princes attached to the mission, who sat beside me, told me that on their way through Germany everyone tried to frighten them by speaking of their foolhardiness in venturing into France where massacres took place all the time.

Although he had not believed these tales, he was surprised to find out on arriving that all one heard talked about here were balls and receptions.

One day an old woman called at Malmaison who seemed to be a hundred years old. She was dressed in the fashion of the days of Louis XVI, with a little black tulle bonnet shaped like a raven's bill, semi hoopskirts and a brocaded gown set off with pockets. Only the stage had kept such costumes for those who played the parts of old women, and no one would ever have suspected that the person dressed in this fashion was the beautiful and famous actress Mademoiselle Chiron, who had once enchanted all of France.

It was she who was the first to discard the habit of wearing dresses that were merely fashionable in favor of those suitable for the different heroines she portrayed. "I wished to see a hero before I died," she said to my mother, "and I thought, madame, you would not refuse me this pleasure."

Indeed, my mother was very kind to her and invited her to spend part of the day at Malmaison while waiting for the Consul to appear. When he did arrive, she looked at him attentively, and if by accident anyone interfered with her view of the First Consul in the drawing room, she would request the person not to conceal him from her during the few moments she had an opportunity of seeing him.

The Consul was most gracious to her and among other things said, "I have heard so much of your admirable talent I greatly regret never having witnessed one of your performances."

"And I," she replied promptly, "am delighted you never did." Everyone was astonished, and she went on, "Had you done so you would now be an old man, First Consul, and France needs you to remain young." Mademoiselle Chiron died some time after this visit, having received from the Consul the assistance she needed badly.

Sometimes in the evening when the Consul had invited no one to Malmaison he would send for a new book and ask me to read aloud. I was so embarrassed by the idea of doing so in front of him and all his staff that I could not tell one word from another. Then he would say, "Didn't Madame Campan teach you to read?" A remark which redoubled my embarrassment. One day he brought out "Ayala," which had just appeared.

I remember it as being a very difficult ordeal. The names of trees, places and animals which abounded in this volume were new to me, and I mispronounced them as though I were doing it on purpose. It was a great trial. If I had only dared, I should have pronounced them haphazard and no one would have noticed it, but I stopped each time and seemed to be spelling them out.

I was so evidently ill at ease that after a few pages the Consul stopped me and never again tried to make me read romantic literature. But another difficulty lay before me. One day he asked me to read him a general report from his minister of finance, a report which was to be presented to the legislative bodies.

It was so full of piled up figures that I had as much trouble as with "Atala." I frequently took one column for another and substituted hundreds of millions for hundreds of thousands or billions of francs.

The Emperor seemed to have all this clearly in his mind, for he never failed to correct me, rectifying my errors, and he always ended by saying, "Didn't Madame Campan teach you arithmetic?" I must say in defense both of Madame Campan and myself that never did columns of figures seem so appalling.

After dinner the Consul would take my mother's arm and stroll about with her for a long time. I would remain alone surrounded by his entire staff. Although at first I was embarrassed I soon became accustomed to the situation. I felt I must conquer a shyness which might make these young men treat

me in a too familiar manner and consequently either ignore me completely, or be too conscious of the embarrassment their presence caused me.

I therefore adopted toward them the attitude of a woman in her own home, who sets the tone of the conversation. I must say that these soldiers, whose life under canvas had kept them away from drawing-rooms, never used a word or an expression that might have shocked me. It is true I chose as topic for our conversation the subject most likely to appeal to them. I questioned them regarding their campaigns in Italy and Egypt. I asked them to tell me the story of their exploits. I praised them and criticized them and I went as far as to give them advice regarding the things in which they were most interested.

I pictured to them what I imagined to be domestic bliss, the only reward they should seek after having won so much glory. I gained their confidence so completely that they consulted me regarding all the offers of marriage they received.

One of them wished me to judge the merits of his fiancée. Another declared he would marry only a girl I chose for him, who shared my views on life, and he asked me to find him someone of this description.

I enjoyed their esteem, affection and regard. As had been the case at Saint-Germain I felt proud of arousing such sentiments, the more so as they appeared to be based entirely on my personal character.

Perhaps this idea made me a little vain, but it strengthened me in my opinions and in the desire to deserve this consideration that was offered me so freely. The officers whose duties brought them oftenest to Maimaison were the Generals Bessieres, Lannes, Clarke, Junot, Murat and the aides-de-camp Le Marois, Caulaincourt, Rapp, Caffarelli, Duroc, Savary, Lauriston, Lacuee, Lebrun, Lefebvre and Bourrienne, the Consul's private secretary.

My brother, major in the Chasseurs de la Garde," was a frequent visitor. Louis Bonaparte, who commanded a regiment of dragoons," did not come so often.

Lavallette was special envoy at Dresden. His wife had reluctantly decided to live with him. For an instant she had hoped to have the marriage annulled. On the return of the expedition from Egypt she had explained her feelings to General Bonaparte and at the same time told him she cared for his brother Louis. The latter replied that he thought my cousin a kind, good woman, but even if she were free, he would not marry her, because she had changed too much in looks since having had the smallpox.

My mother conveyed this message to my cousin, who was indignant. On the other hand, the attentions of her husband, the care he took of her, and his kindness to her gradually won her heart and aroused a warm affection toward the person she had avoided.

Since then a lasting union has been the result of this change of heart. Louis' attitude toward my cousin had prejudiced me against him. The fact of our being in a sense related to one another caused me to look on him as a brother, and when occasion offered, I sometimes jested at his expense.

It had never entered my mind that he could become my husband, that he could have the least affection for me. But when he came to say good-by before leaving for Prussia he asked permission to kiss me, did so with such evident emotion, and went out of the room so hurriedly that I remained standing motionless.

A kind of terror seized me when I conceived the idea, he might nourish too warm a sentiment for me. Of all the young men I came in contact with, only one, Colonel Duroc, dared propose.

Recalling the fact that the Consul had planned to marry him to his sister, he thought that my stepfather would not oppose a match between us. I had noticed that he was more embarrassed than the others in speaking to me, that he called more frequently at Malmaison, but he had never said a word as to what was in his mind.

Murat wormed the secret out of him and took it into his head to see that this match took place. "The young lady is romantically inclined," he declared. "One must sigh for some time before hoping to please her. Meanwhile you should declare your sentiments and inform her she is the object of your affections."

As a result of this advice, one day when I returned to the drawing-room to look for a book I had forgotten Duroc came up and timidly returned the volume. Ongoing up to my room I opened the book and found a letter. What should I do? To read it seemed to be committing a sin. I went back downstairs to return it to Duroc, but he was no longer there.

The Consul had sent him away on a mission. It was only at the moment of his departure that he had dared to declare himself. I put the letter in my writing table, which as usual I did not lock, and left my room. As chance would have it at dinner time the Consul, who enjoyed teasing me, came into the drawing-room with my mother and finding me there already said to me,

"We have just been to your room. We have ransacked all your papers and read all your love letters. What tender missives you receive!"

I blushed, I stammered, I forgot the joke was not a new one. I felt guilty, and the idea was enough to make me look like a criminal. Uncertain what reply to make left the room hurriedly and rushed to my writing desk.

The letter was still unopened. I went downstairs again more calmly. But my emotion had not escaped the attention of my mother and the Consul. When I came in they said to me in surprise, "Can it really be true? Have you really secrets? You hurried off very suddenly."

Fortunately, the serving of dinner put an end to my predicament. The same evening, I told mother everything. Duroc had left a messenger with Murat to bring him word of my answer. I told Caroline that I would never make a decision without knowing my mother's opinion of the matter and I begged her to return the famous letter to the sender.

"I do not know," I added, "what fate holds in store for me, but I should not want to be obliged to admit I read a love letter from anyone else than the man who was to be my husband." I admit that before giving it back I was strongly tempted to try to read it without undoing the envelop, just to see how a man proposed, but I resisted the impulse and feel I had considerable merit in doing so. Duroc, although not the man my imagination conjured up as the being worthy to receive all my love, was not displeasing to me. I recognized the fact he had numerous qualities.

The great respect he had for me caused me to believe in the sincerity of his feelings. Frequently, nevertheless, when I was listening to him, I said to myself, "This is not yet the man."

Perhaps after all I should have been willing to marry him had it not been for my mother's formal opposition to the match. The Consul saw no objection, but she took the contrary view. Brought up according to the ideas that prevailed among the aristocracy, she considered it a mésalliance to marry someone not a member of the nobility.

She concealed her prejudices by being equally gracious to all those with whom she came in contact. They did not influence in any way her kindness, which was the same for all, but she considered that nothing was good enough for her daughter. Although Duroc was a gentleman she demanded higher rank either in him or in his family.

"I cannot imagine hearing you spoken of as Madame Duroc," she said to me. "Are you in love with him? I should be so sorry if you were." I reassured my mother. I told her my heart was untouched, my life was happy, I did not care to consider change of any kind. I felt sincerely uneasy over what to others might have appeared a mere incident of no importance. The idea that I was hurting someone was unbearable.

I took seriously everything that had to do with affairs of the heart. I could not laugh at a thing that sprang from that source.

Bourrienne, the Consul's private secretary, was a man of a certain age. He was very plain, witty but only in a satiric manner, and more to be feared in a drawing-room on account of his malicious way of stating a case than on account of his official position.

Of a sudden he began to look glum, speak little, read nothing but Young's "Night Thoughts" and in the evenings go alone into the woods. People would encounter him leaning against a tree and weeping.

Even the Consul noticed his condition. The advice of Doctor Corvisart was asked, but he admitted he was unable to understand it. General Bessieres offered the unkind suggestion that only two things could produce such an effect on Bourrienne, either a financial catastrophe or an unhappy love affair.

This threw a light on the matter. Everyone at Malmaison was convinced Bourrienne was consumed with passion for me. It was considered a case of insanity, but so serious that no one dared make fun of it openly. My mother spoke to me about it.

The idea had never entered my head. I watched for signs that would justify these rumors and speedily discovered them. No sooner had I become aware of the harm I had done unconsciously than I resolved to remedy it.

How could this be accomplished? Youth is prepared to undertake anything. Its innocence acts as a stimulus it deserves to achieve its purpose because it makes the attempt so straightforwardly and so bravely. I sought to see more of Bourrienne, to whom before I had scarcely paid any attention. It was difficult to have a conversation with him as he purposely avoided me. Finally, the occasion presented itself. I began by inquiring about his health. "You should take care of yourself," I told him, "for the sake of your wife and children. Have you consulted your doctor?" "He can do nothing for me."

"Then perhaps your friends can help you. If you are suffering from some illness that is not physical but moral, you should seek help from your wife."

"She does not know what ails me. No one suspects it." "What, do you mean to say you are suffering from a sorrow that no one shares with you and that you are not strong enough to overcome?"

"That surprises you, does it, mademoiselle? But what would your feelings be if you loved deeply a person your mother forbade you to marry?"

"If the person loved me, even my suffering would be dear to me. Perhaps I should not seek to hide my feelings. But I should be ashamed of a grief that I alone felt, that distressed my friends, that prevented me from carrying out my duties properly."

I should summon up my courage and conquer it." Bourrienne gave me a long look and took my hand. "You have cured me," he said. "I thank you. You have done more for me than you can realize." From that day on he resumed his customary manner, and not a word or a look indicated that I meant anything in his life. I was delighted with this cure. I was astonished to have inspired a strong affection.

Always behaving naturally, without any attempt at coquetry I wished to be liked but made no attempt to please. While my friendly attitude toward everyone about me was doubtless prompted by a desire to be praised, with it was mingled a hope that this praise might come to the ears of the man whom Heaven had chosen for my life's companion.

"He does not know me," I said to myself, "but he will know that others care for me and perhaps that will make him love me the more."

My social life did not cause me to forget my former companions. I often went to see them at Saint Germain and also visited my grandfather, who had retired to that town. He died there at the age of about eighty-seven, surrounded by our respect and tender affection and bearing with him all our just regrets.

My ability to support all of life's vicissitudes is principally due to the fact that my imagination magnifies coming misfortunes which when they arrive appear less terrifying than the picture I conjure up in advance. Hence, I find myself with more than enough courage to face all such perils and afflictions as may befall me. I recall one occasion when a rebuke from the Consul failed to affect me at all.

My room in the Tuileries was at the end facing the garden. A little chapel at the corner served me as a work room. It was very small, barely large enough to hold two people. At the time, I was copying in oil a portrait of my brother by Gros, and all my papers and drawings were on the floor against the wall. As it was very cold in this room, a pipe for heating the place, which one could open or shut at will, had just been installed. When we left for Malmaison I had forgotten to shut it.

The next morning General Clarke came to me in consternation. "Do you know the misfortune that has taken place?" I began to tremble and grew pale as my thoughts flew to my brother, who had just rejoined his regiment.

"Tell me what has happened," I said to the General, scarcely able to breathe. "All your drawings have been burned," he replied. "All your paintings have been blackened and are ruined. There was a fire last night in your little study."

As he spoke, he watched me closely to see what effect his words would have. I felt as though he had told me a piece of good news. My heart resumed its normal beat, and laughing I answered, "How delighted I am and how you frightened me!" At that moment the Consul came into the drawing-room and said with a very stern air, "How did it happen you left papers beside a chimney? A fire broke out last night, and if a sentinel had not noticed it you would be responsible for the destruction of the Tuileries. The entire palace might have been reduced to ashes."

I listened to him with a smile. I could not manage to look distressed. The more he noticed my attitude the more angry he became as he expatiated on the disasters of which I might have been the cause. But I felt so happy at having escaped a danger which involved my affections and which General Clarke's manner had caused me to fear, everything which proved my imagination had been mistaken seemed so agreeable to me, that my step-father's reproofs produced no effect on me.

About this time Louis I of Etruria and his Queen passed through Paris on the way to Tuscany, whose crown the Consul had just bestowed upon him.

It was the first time the Consul had created a kingdom and Louis was the first Bourbon to appear in France since the Revolution. Orders, necessary in those days, had been given that the King and Queen were to be well and politely treated everywhere. They did not attract any particular attention. Only at Bordeaux did the crowd behave disrespectfully. The sovereigns were attending a performance at the theater, and an actor recited verses written in honor of the Queen by someone who had never seen her.

The author praised her beauty, at which the audience laughed so loudly that those who were with the King and Queen were much embarrassed, for although she was young, kind and gentle the Queen was exceedingly homely.

I have frequently thought of this incident in order to estimate official compliments at their just value. The King was tall with a good figure. Drooping cheeks and thick lips made his face expressionless. He was subject to epileptic fits.

He and his wife often came to Malmaison. The first day the Consul paid no attention to them; he had too much to do elsewhere. My mother was ill, and it was therefore I who was obliged to entertain them. They were not difficult to keep amused. Walks, music, prisoner's base, parlor games—everything delighted them.

In fact, when at length the Consul wished to instruct Louis in the arts of statecraft, he found him so absent minded that he accused me jokingly of having made our guest forget his royal rank.

Before our visitors left, the Consul had Berthier and Talleyrand give two receptions for them, which filled them with astonishment, particularly on account of the contrast formed by the brilliance of French society and the dullness of the Spanish court.

One day my mother introduced me to a lady who had come over from England and only once visited Malmaison. It was the Duchesse de Guiche. She did not see the Consul. If, as I have heard since, she had hoped to find in Napoleon another Monk her trip was not a success. I was too young to gather any exact details regarding the matter so I will not attempt to give any. All I know is that the royalists hoped that France, which was beginning to feel the need of permanent government, would be inclined to forget the past and call the Bourbon family back to power.

The feeling that a government only temporarily in office was not sufficiently stable was shared by men of all classes. The conspirators who had attempted to slay the Consul, with whose life the future of France seemed interwoven, had aroused such hatred that even those in favor of a new republic believed it was necessary to strengthen the powers of the Consul of such a republic, in order to prevent the enemies of the Revolution from being able constantly to endanger the results which it had cost so much to secure.

Those in favor of a monarchy demanded also that it be invested with such guarantees as would insure its stability. They considered that the talents of the Consul made him the only one able to achieve this continuity and ward off reactionary movements which were always to be avoided.

The higher aristocracy, many of whose members lived abroad, regretted its lost privileges and realized that only by a return of the Bourbons would it be possible to regain them, but it had no hope of this return taking place.

One day the Consul received a very cleverly drafted genealogical chart showing his descent from Louis XIV in the direct line. The person who in order to please all factions had imagined this hoax sought to prove that the Man in the Iron Mask was one of the sons of Louis XIII and Anne of Austria and that Louis XIV was only a second son whose father moreover was the Cardinal Richelieu.

The Man in the Iron Mask, according to the genealogist, having been sent to the Island of Saint Margaret, married there the daughter of one of the local nobles. His son had taken the name Bonaparte and had established himself in Corsica. Consequently, the Consul was the legitimate heir to the French throne. The Consul was much amused at this fairy-tale and laughed about it with us. He was always far prouder of his personal ability than of any illustrious ancestor he might have had or who might be attributed to him.

The love of his fellow countrymen was the best of his claims to office. In our drawing-room there was never a word spoken about political matters. The only one that interested us was the signing of a peace treaty, and we were the last to be informed even about that. When the peace with Vendee was concluded the chiefs of the insurgents who came to Malmaison received a warm welcome from the Consul. He appeared to hold them in high esteem. I frequently have heard him praise them for defending their cause so perseveringly and blame the Bourbons for not having supported such a valiant resistance.

Once, after the Empire had been proclaimed, I heard him say, "I do not know what I should have been able to do if the Bourbons had put themselves at the head of the Vendees."

The Consul's aide-de-camp Colonel Lauriston was sent to England. He was received in triumph, and his carriage was dragged about by the crowd through the streets of London. All of France also felt enthusiastic over the reconciliation of the two great countries which for so long had been enemies.

The Consul himself, who so seldom expressed his satisfaction about anything, showed his pleasure on this occasion. He hastened to announce the news to us and immediately ordered the cannon to be fired as sign of rejoicing. It was the only time I ever knew him to inform anyone, especially any woman, regarding a political event.

I do not know whether he had opened the dispatches addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or if he had received the news directly, but Monsieur de Talleyrand appeared at dinner in a very bad humor, quite put out, in fact, as someone would be whose vanity had been deprived of an occasion to score a hit. As a matter of fact it was distinctly odd for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to learn that peace had been signed by the firing of the guns at the Hotel des Invalides. To console him for this little mishap. the Consul smilingly paid him special attention.

CHAPTER IV
MADAME LOUIS BONAPARTE (1802-1804)

Bourrienne Delivers a Message—The Marriage of Hortense and Louis Bonaparte—Domestic Difficulties—Pitiful Dilemma—Quarrels and Reconciliations—Sidelight's on General Moreau's Conspiracy The Death of the Duc d'Enghien.

MY mother's health obliged her to take the waters at Plombieres. I went there with her and my cousin, who accompanied by her husband had returned from Dresden. During our stay a number of receptions and balls were given for us. While at Plombieres I met several more suitors for my hand, but none was of sufficient rank to disturb my peace of mind, I being still loath to consider matrimony. As I have said I dreamed of marrying a man who was perfect, but I had already discovered that perfection was hard to find. I left Plombieres with regret, haunted by painful forebodings. It seemed to me that I was enjoying any last moments of freedom and happiness.

I realized that on my return to Paris steps would be taken to arrange a marriage for me. I was seventeen years old. My mother, who at that age had already had her two children, felt I was too old for any further delay. We had scarcely returned home when she spoke about the matter to the Consul, who agreed with her and added that only one match was worth considering, namely, his brother Louis. "We may never have children," he went on.

"I brought up Louis myself; I look on him as a son. Your daughter is what you cherish most on earth. Their children shall be our children. We will adopt them, and this adoption will console us for not having any of our own.

But it is necessary that our plan meet with the young people's approval.

My mother was delighted with the Consul's proposal. It fulfilled all her desires and charmed her the more since it seemed to mean that I would remain near her. Bourrienne requested an audience with me one day and addressed me as follows:

"I have been commissioned to suggest something to you which your mother and the Consul would be very glad to see take place. They wish you to marry Colonel Louis Bonaparte.

He is kind and affectionate. His tastes are simple. He will appreciate you to the fullest degree and is the only suitable husband for you. Look about you. Who is there you would care to marry?

The time has come when you must consider the matter seriously. No one until now has appealed to you; and if your heart made a choice that did not meet with your parents' approval, would you be prepared to disobey them?

You love France. Do you want to leave it? Your mother cannot bear the thought of your being the wife of some foreign prince who would separate you from her forever. You know it is her great

sorrow no longer to hope to have a child.

You can remedy this and perhaps ward off a still greater misfortune. I assure you intrigues are constantly being formed to persuade the Consul to obtain a divorce. Only your marriage can tighten and strengthen those bonds on which depends your mother's happiness. Will you hesitate?"

I had let Bourrienne keep on talking without interrupting him. I discovered for the first time that I had in my power to contribute to my mother's peace of mind. How could I refuse?

But I needed to become accustomed little by little to the idea of uniting my life with that of a man whom I did not care for especially. Such a proposal required mature consideration. I asked for eight days and promised to give my answer at the end of that period. My brother had just gone to Lyons with his regiment. He had preceded the Consul.

I could not have the advantage of his advice and, moreover, I felt that it was for me to make my own decision. It was a question of sacrificing my romantic fancies to my mother's happiness. I could not hesitate between the two. In fact, this very element of sacrifice had something in it which appealed to me. How sweet it is to give up a thing on behalf of another person, how much sweeter still when that other person is your mother!

One thing made me pause. "Is it right," I asked myself, "to marry a man who does not seem to possess all those qualities which you demand? . . . Does one's heart contain everything necessary to make him happy when love is absent from the sentiments with which he inspires you?"

My reason assured me Louis Bonaparte did not displease me, that his conduct toward my cousin had been merely thoughtlessness on his part. Doubtless his kindness would make me love him in time.

The ideal being I had created in my imagination did not exist. Time would have shown me my mistake. I must forget my romantic dream. Nor would my future be an unhappy one since it was founded on the affection and esteem of a husband, on the accomplishment of my duty.

I arrived at my irrevocable decision, not, however, without being occasionally haunted by visions of felicity which, as the tears that rose to my eyes showed, were dearer to me than I was prepared to admit.

The eight days having elapsed I gave Bourrienne my reply, but strange to say, from the day I did so I became calm. All my inner tumult seemed to have passed from me to my mother.

Too well aware of my ideas on marriage not to suspect the reasons underlying my acceptance, she wept continuously. Her glances seemed to say, "You are sacrificing yourself for me."

I realized that in order to console her I must seem satisfied. Madame Campan came to Malmaison. She spoke to me about Louis Bonaparte's character. He was generally respected, and she thought he would make me happy. I was glad to have her opinion. Nevertheless, I revealed to her one of

my fears. "Louis seems to me to be kindhearted and good," I said to her, "but I do not like the disdain with which he pretends to look upon women and which often appears in his conversation. Will this not be a source of sorrow to the woman who marries him?"

"My dear angel"—that was her name for me "young men who have grown up as soldiers know few good women. It is natural therefore for them to have a poor opinion of our sex, but no one is better qualified than you are to make your husband change his opinion. Louis will attach all the more value to his wife's virtue because he believes that quality is such a rare one, and you will rejoice in a conversion which you yourself will have brought about."

I was vain. Therefore, I accepted what Madame Campan had to say and I no longer worried over the fault I had noticed in the man who was about to become my husband.

We returned to Paris. The Consul sent for his brother, who at the time was with his regiment. They were talking together in my mother's room when I happened to come in. I heard the Consul pronounce the following words,

"She is a sweet and virtuous girl." I withdrew at once. My heart was beating violently. I guessed the Consul was speaking of my marriage and that in connection with it he was praising me.

Indeed, a few days later the matter was definitely settled and announced. The news was received with joy throughout the palace but especially among the aides-de-camp. They congratulated themselves that I was not leaving them, that they could always consult me about what was uppermost in their hearts.

They had feared I would be married off to some foreign prince. One rumor suggested I was to become the bride of the Duke of Cumberland, another named Archduke Charles, all these rumors were without foundation.

In fact, there could have been no question just then of such a match. Lucien Bonaparte, who for some time had been a widower, had asked for my hand. The Consul had refused it angrily. Lucien was annoyed and, as I learned later, attempted to dissuade Louis from marrying me. I do not know what he said but Louis became uneasy.

He had no opportunities of speaking to me privately as I was always surrounded by people in the drawing-room and I never received anyone in my own apartment. He wrote me a twenty page letter in which he told me, as it were, the story of his life, which for a long time had gravitated about a young woman named Sophie.

He described her in detail and also her tastes and habits. With the happiness he felt when thinking of our marriage there mingled certain fears, for he saw all the world at my feet and could not believe that a simple domestic existence would appeal to me.

He begged me in return to describe my past life to him in full. It would have been difficult for me to give him any striking facts on the subject and, when I returned his letter, in accordance with his request, I merely replied that for a long time my life had been known to him.

As far as my tastes were concerned, I did not consider that happiness and brilliant social position went together. He answered: "If your popularity and society have not spoiled you, you must be an angel. There can be no middle ground. You must be all good or all bad."

I smiled and thanked him for the compliment. I could not suppose that, admitting the existence of these two alternatives, his opinion could be otherwise than favorable.

In these confidences, Louis never mentioned his affection for my cousin. I felt rather badly about this but concealed the fact in order not to cause him any embarrassment.

I thought perhaps that it had never existed except in my cousin's imagination, that this love-affair had merely been a dream.

The Consul had not yet said a word to me about my marriage. Finally, he spoke of it in the following terms so Louis is courting you, is he? That ought to suit you and also your mother. I give my consent to the match."

My mother had not been able to fix the day of the ceremony. She burst into tears each time the subject was mentioned. The Consul consoled her, made fun of her, and, as he was in a hurry to leave for Lyons where the Consulta of Milan was waiting to arrange with him the organization of the Italian Republic, he decided I was to marry two days later.

I was not well at the time. I asked my mother to obtain a further two days' delay. The Consul consented although annoyed at being obliged to postpone a journey for which all the preparations had been made. Louis, who had not been told of the new arrangement, called on my mother. He was much upset.

He could not understand how one could change the date of such an event. In vain he sought to discover the causes for this modification of the program. When told it had been done at my request, he said nothing further but acted as though he sought to conceal a disagreeable impression of some kind. Mother suggested we live near her in the Tuileries. He declined, and the Consul gave us the little house in the rue de la Victoire, considering it natural enough that young married people should wish to have a house of their own and be by themselves.

My mother's grief contrasted with my calmness. The more I saw her weep, the more courage I had to seem contented. I was pleased my brother was not present. From him I could not have concealed the truth. He would have guessed that my happiness was not complete. I should have felt sorry for myself when I caught his eye and I needed all my courage to pronounce that "yes" which, while it seemed to be to the beginning of a calm and placid existence, marked the end of those dreams of pure

yet vivid delight which I had cherished ever since I could remember.

On January 3, 1802, my old nurse entered my room. She had heard my marriage was to take place that evening, and wishing to be the first to congratulate me had hurried to Paris from her village.

She embraced me with that peculiar tenderness that countrywomen feel all their lives towards those whom they have nourished with their milk. I cannot tell what feelings came over me, but I burst into tears and for a moment was unable to hide a bitter despair, whose intensity frightened me. At the sight of this emotion the joy of the good woman turned to anguish, but I promptly recovered and once more summoned up all my courage. The day passed drearily enough in the choosing and distributing of various pieces of jewelry to be given the palace servants. They received them with tears in their eyes and expressed their regret that they would no longer wait on me. Such things are always touching, but my courage had returned and I was prepared to face anything without betraying emotion. My marriage took place in strict privacy.

The Consuls Cambaceres and Lebrun, General Bessieres and Monsieur Lavallotte acted as witnesses.

My mother had had a very handsome dress made for me trimmed with flowers. The Consul gave me a set of diamonds (necklace, earrings, bracelet, etc.). When the time came for me to dress it seemed silly to me to make such an effort to appear beautiful.

I insisted on wearing only my pearls, a white crepe dress and carrying a simple bouquet of orange blossoms. Would I have consented to such simplicity had I been more enthusiastic?

That I cannot say. The Consul called for us to take us to the apartments of state where the municipal authorities were waiting for us.

We went up his private staircase with my mother. Louis attempted to follow us. The Consul advised him to go up by the grand stairway. This incident seemed to annoy him.

The ceremony took place. Only my mother wept. I was so afraid of saying yes in a weak, trembling voice that I pronounced it louder than, perhaps, I should have done. We went to the rue de la Victoire, where the Cardinal Caprara, who had arrived in France shortly before to attend to affairs connected with the Church, was waiting for us in a temporary chapel.

He gave us the nuptial blessing. Murat and Caroline received it at the same time, for when they were married the services of the Catholic faith had not yet been reestablished. This double ceremony produced a disagreeable impression on me. The other couple were so happy. They were so much in love with one another.

Was it superstition or second sight? I felt as though all the happiness lay on one side, all the unhappiness on the other. I reassured myself, however. Everybody told me how kind Louis was, how

happy I should be, and I wanted to persuade myself it was true. We went into a drawing-room where the magnificent wedding presents were displayed.

These baubles did not interest me, but my indifference appeared to vex my husband. As soon as I noticed this, I did my best to make amends. The next day we lunched at the Tuileries. The Consul joked with me.

My mother still wept. To change her mood, he spoke to her of his trip to Lyons and inquired what people were saying about it.

"It is stated," she replied, "that you are going there to have yourself elected King of Italy." The Consul answered laughingly, "He created kings but would not be one."

In the course of the evening my husband asked mother for a list of the names of all our relatives. He had thought it absurd that our marriage was not announced as is usually done and without consulting his brother had announcement cards made in the name of my mother and of his own and sent them all over Paris.

The Consul heard of this and flew into a rage.

"What are you meddling with now?" he said to my husband. "If I had wished to follow the accepted custom, I should have sent out these cards in my own name.

Am I not taking your father's place? Isn't it my stepdaughter you married? What right have you to make use of my wife's name without my permission? You should be aware of the fact that since I hold the office of First Consul the French authorities and the foreign ambassadors ought to have been advised of and invited to this wedding, and that it only took place privately in order to avoid the trouble of an elaborate ceremony.

They will not understand this oversight and will not realize that you are to blame for it. The stupid things you do, I am held responsible for.

You have no business to try to be independent and I will not allow it." We were distressed by this severe rebuke from the Consul. My husband could hardly forgive his brother for having made such a scene in front of me.

Later he repeatedly declared to me, "Although my brother is head of the state, he is not the head of the family. Joseph, the eldest brother, holds that rank." The Consul left Paris with my mother three days after my wedding. Her departure saddened me. I found myself left alone with a husband whose character I had not yet become acquainted with.

To be sure I was already aware that little things were able to upset him, but I had firmly resolved to do my best to satisfy him in every respect, to do everything that lay in my power to make him happy. The future now showed itself to me as different from what I had pictured it, but I visualized it as a calm

and placid existence.

"If I have children," I said to myself, "I shall give them all my thoughts, all my devotion. Surely they are enough to satisfy, to absorb all the ardor of my nature. I decided that my sole object in life would be to please my husband, to cultivate my natural accomplishments, to safeguard my reputation. I would take the same care to avoid every man who might make the least impression on me as I had previously taken to find my ideal. Should chance place that ideal in my way I was prepared to flee. Or rather I would confess my weakness to my husband, for was not the latter my advisor, my counselor and my friend?

All these resolutions reassured me as regards the future and led me to look forward to a life that would be interesting but devoid of storms and tempests. I recalled Madame Campan's witty remarks about what is called the honeymoon."

"The first days of married life," she would say, "are always pure and serene. For a whole month the husband is most attentive, most thoughtful, most gallant.

He is never impatient about anything. Pretty soon, however, a cloud appears; that cloud generally takes the form of a dress. The couple are going out. He is all ready, notices that he has been waiting some time and ventures to say so emphatically.

She is so astonished. She is upset. Tears are shed. Her husband consoles her, tells her it does not matter, but the scene is reenacted on the morrow. No longer does the consolation take place. The honeymoon has set."

I remembered this little story. In the hope of prolonging the honeymoon beyond the fatal day I trained myself to dress so quickly that I was constantly having to wait for the others. This is one example of the way in which I from the beginning strove to save my husband the least annoyance, being as scrupulously careful about little things as I was painstaking about more important ones.

Why did I fail so utterly to succeed? It was four days after my marriage. I was trying on a corset in my bedroom. Louis came in. Blushing I slipped a scarf over my shoulders. I interrupted my toilet. He wished me to continue dressing. I refused.

He insisted. I became more and more embarrassed, and he left the room in a temper. When I saw him again, instead of speaking gently to me and telling me what I had done to hurt his feelings, he addressed me severely.

"Do you not know, madame, that a wife should not be prudish in the presence of her husband? Can you not imagine what the women around you will think of your attitude?

They will tell everyone that you do not love me, that you married me against your will." I did not know what reply to make. My mind was in a whirl. How was I to have foreseen such a dispute? I

remained motionless with fear and surprise.

The Consul had given us permission to live at Malmaison while he was away. We decided to go there in spite of the cold weather. Adele Auguié accompanied me.

We spent our days walking in the snow-covered woods and our evenings sitting by the fireside. One of Louis' friends who was an officer in the regiment he commanded joined us for a few days. He was rather awkward. While we read aloud and he sat by a table on which were a number of puzzles, he tried them all one after another without being able to solve any of them.

We wanted to laugh. Louis, who had just begun a novel, stopped and accused us of making fun of him. This made us serious at once. Unfortunately, we happened to glance again at the young officer who could not undo a hoop from the ring puzzle. We again burst out laughing, and neither my husband's air of displeasure nor our own efforts could restrain our mirth.

Everything increased our hilarity, which, however, ended on my part by bitter tears. When we were alone my husband said to me very seriously, "Whom do you take me for? Do you believe I am prepared to be treated as though I were a clown? I warn you only a woman of light morals dares laugh at her husband and make sport of him. I would rather leave you than allow myself to be thus humiliated."

Words cannot describe my despair. In an instant I saw all my dreams not only of happiness but even of tranquility collapse about me. I could not have imagined the existence of a character such as I found myself confronted with. The thought of the future terrified me.

For having committed a childish prank, natural enough considering my age, I found myself treated in this manner. How could I hope to satisfy a nature which took offense at such trifles? I had never been in the habit of weighing a single one of my words or actions.

Everything I did met with the approval of those about me. I no longer sought to be praised, but I felt the need of being better understood. A hundred gloomy thoughts besieged my brain, and I felt come over me feelings I had never before experienced.

My nerves gave way. Only tears brought relief. My husband, touched and affected by the sight of my grief, sought to console me, but the harm had been done.

My only sentiment towards Louis became one of fear. I dared no longer smile or speak in his presence. It always seemed to me he was on the point of losing his temper. Although still filled with a longing to make him happy I felt I no longer knew how to do so.

Madame Campan gave a little party for us at Saint Germain. She had asked Isabey to paint a thousand incidents of my childhood. One scene showed me entering school later I was shown taking different lessons; still later a young man appeared as a suitor; in short it was the whole story of my life

shown in a series of magic lantern slides.

Before each picture one of my fellow pupils sang an appropriate verse. Several, as they expressed their regrets that I was no longer with them, burst into tears. One of them whispered to Madame Campan, "I can't bear the sight of her husband when I think it is he who robbed us of her affections, who took her away from us."

Madame Campan repeated this remark to my husband, thinking he would be pleased with it as showing how popular I was. He said nothing. I did the same. I suppressed even the pleasant emotions which these expressions of sincere friendship aroused in me, for I was conscious that Louis was exasperated by them.

A phrase showed me to what an extent he had left ill at ease. "I have been made to look like a fool," he declared on our return from Saint Germain.

Afterwards he was never willing to return there and assumed a distant attitude towards Madame Campan. Thus, passed my honeymoon, that first month of married life which is said to be the happiest of a woman's life. Be that as it may, in my case, painful though it was, it was nevertheless one of those months during which I was the least unhappy.

Hope still remained with me. I still cherished the idea of in some way reclaiming Louis' uneasy, restless nature by my assiduous care. My mother returned with the Consul. She questioned me closely regarding my home life. I answered that I was happy, that I was delighted with my husband. She was satisfied—that was all I wanted.

Moreover, I should have felt I was committing a wrong to complain of the man to whom fate had irrevocably bound me. Only to Adele's bosom did I confide all my fears for the future. I hoped these effusions might bring relief, that so sincere a friendship might strengthen my courage.

Since she had come back my mother often looked at me attentively. Her eyes seemed to be seeking in my face the first signs of an approaching pregnancy, which she predicted and which shortly afterwards declared itself. My husband, my mother and the Consul were overjoyed.

The latter repeatedly told me he hoped I would not have a daughter for he was not prepared to give a girl a warm welcome. As far as my personal wishes were concerned, I desired a child, that was all.

At the time I was copying the head of a young child in one of Greuze's paintings. I imagined that mine would have some of the features of those of the charming model. Later—was it an illusion or a reality? I actually found a resemblance between them. The signing of the Concordat took place about this time [1801] marking the reestablishment of the Catholic religion in France.

The following Easter the Consul attended the services at Notre Dame in great pomp. We were present in one of the tribunes. From that time on mass was said every Sunday and fête day at the

Tuileries.

Adele was the daughter of Monsieur Auguié, former receveur general des Finances. She had two elder sisters who were very dear to me. One of them, Antoinette, god-child of the King and Queen of France, married Monsieur Gamot. Possessing brilliancy of mind together with natural gifts and high moral qualities, she would have been an ornament to society, but her husband's career, the education of her children, an active spirit of charity which led her frequently into the squalid garrets of the poor had confined her activities in a round of duties.

Eglé, Adele's second sister, was very kind, charming and sensitive. We married her to General Ney and I continued to see her frequently. I was never so happy as when I was with these friends. Three evenings a week we had a drawing lesson.

Sometimes it was held at our house, sometimes at that of one of the others. We paid strict attention to the lessons of our teacher Isabey till ten o'clock, when tea was served. My husband and Eglé, who had never sketched before, were the most backward pupils. We sometimes made fun of their landscapes, and they freely admitted their shortcomings. Once when my carriage had failed to arrive, I asked Adele's father to take me home.

Louis made another of his scenes, and a serious one at that, because I had not said take us instead of take me. Apparently, he did not count. I excused myself on the ground that I was not yet accustomed to saying us. As I did so my fear of constantly hurting his feelings was renewed.

When warm weather brought us back to Malmaison we gave amateur theatricals. Among the Consul's officers there were some very good actors, but frequently, just when the performance was about to take place, the hero or the faithful servant would be sent on a special mission, and the play would have to be put off. My husband, who always knew his lines, enjoyed this amusement.

Several women noted for their charm had recently become members of the household. All the officers attached to the Consul's person were married. General Lannes had married a young Parisian, who was beautiful and well educated the wife of General Bessieres was a girl from his province, kind, gentle and pious. I had just arranged the marriage of General Savary and a relative of mine, Mademoiselle de Faudoas, who had been brought up at Saint Germain and who was remarkably good-looking; Colonel Caffarelli had married Mademoiselle d'Ecquevilly, and General Junot, Mademoiselle de Permon. The four ladies in waiting whom the Consul had just appointed were noted for their wealth and their excellent reputation. They were Madame de Lucay, Madame de Talhouet, Madame de Lauriston and Madame de Remusat.

The last of these owed her position to my mother's recommendation. Daughter of Monsieur de Vergennes and with a brilliant mind herself, her appointment as lady in waiting and that of her husband as prefet du Palais had released them from the financial straits the family had been in since the Revolution.

I generally did not use rouge because I had a good natural complexion, but one day when we had been acting I had so much on that I did not know how to take it off. My maid suggested my mother's face cream, creme de rose. I ran to her dressing-room where she was alone, undressing. Having washed my face I returned at once to my room.

Louis had just come in. My maid told him where I was, and I repeated her statement, but he did not say a word. The following day he sat writing in my room, then went out leaving the table covered with the papers he had just written.

Undoubtedly, they were intended for me, but the thought of reading them never crossed my mind. I should have been afraid of being indiscreet. Consequently, I was not in any way alarmed, nor did I imagine for a moment that my husband was angry with me. A few hours later Louis came back and said in a natural tone of voice I've just ordered my carriage.

I have to go and see how work at my little country place at Baillon is getting on."

"Am I to accompany you?" I inquired.

"No, I want to have everything done over. I will be with the workmen all the time. You had better stay here. You'll see me again before long. Then too your mother would make a fuss if you left."

I did not answer and kissed him good-by.

Two or three days went by. I thought a surprise would please him. I spoke of it to mother, who approved of the idea but made me promise to return two days later. I invited Adele and her sister to supper with me the day I came back on my way through Paris. My husband seemed astonished to see me and treated me coldly. Yet when I prepared to leave he sought to keep me with him.

I told him mother would be alarmed, adding that the Mesdemoiselles Auguié were expecting me for supper. At this mention of a supper of schoolgirls he smiled skeptically and when my carriage arrived stepped in with me.

At first he suggested driving with me only as far as the end of the avenue of the estate, but he allowed himself finally to be persuaded to go all the way to Paris, where he was surprised and embarrassed to find that only two young women were waiting for me.

The next day he left again without having made the slightest attempt to explain his conduct. I supposed that his estate amused him and could not imagine any reason for his aloofness. Several days passed. The Consul inquired why Louis stayed away and considered it absurd for a newly married husband to leave the wife he was supposed to love in this manner.

I do not know whether he thought we had quarreled, but at any rate he sent for Louis, and as soon as he arrived called him into his study. A few moments later my mother and I were sent for.

"What is this I hear, Hortense?" the Consul said to me as I came in "Your husband has just cause for complaint against you? You who I thought were so good! Have you forgotten your domestic duties as a wife?"

"But what have I done?" I exclaimed. "I have not the slightest idea."

"Your husband complains that during your drawing class you and your friends have no regard for his feelings, that you make fun of him, that he receives none of those marks of esteem which he has a right to expect."

"Is it possible," I exclaimed sobbing, "that he believes me capable of forgetting myself to such an extent? If I laugh sometimes, why must he always think I do so at his expense? Why does he not give me his confidence? Why does he not tell me what his wishes are? To please him I am prepared to sacrifice all my pleasures."

"That is true," said the Consul, speaking to Louis. "Why do you conceal your grievances?"

"Ah, how can I express them?" replied my husband. "Whenever I speak to her, she bursts into tears."

He had hardly finished speaking when the Consul losing his temper exclaimed: "You do not deserve such a wife. She feels your reproaches, she weeps, and instead of being touched you are irritated by her tears.

Do you not feel the joy of knowing you are to become a father?" As he spoke, he betrayed his deep emotion that such a happiness was denied him.

He went on more gently "At least appreciate that sign of her affection. You should be at her knees, caring for her, cherishing her; instead of that you hurt her. Ah, Louis, you who I thought were so kind-hearted, so sensitive, I no longer know you."

The Consul's anger dried my tears. I was no longer irritated with my husband's unfair attitude toward me. I pitied him for having incurred this humiliation. Moreover, I was well aware that such a scene would tend to irritate his temper rather than calm it. From then on, our life became more and more uncomfortable and constrained.

Although endowed with a robust constitution my husband had one hand which was affected with a wasting disease " and whose condition worried him.

He wished to take a treatment at the health resort of Bareges in the Pyrenees. The Consul objected again to this trip on the grounds of the inconveniences travelers had to put up with and the comments it was likely to arouse.

"People will say I married my stepdaughter to a husband who was a cripple and an invalid." In the end, however, he gave in, for his brother was always obstinate. Louis wished me to accompany him. My mother did not approve of the idea and even frightened me by describing the bad effects such a long trip might have on me in view of my condition and my duties toward the child I was about to bring into the world.

I was torn between these duties and the obedience I owed my husband. He, meanwhile, demanded I declare formally to my mother and the Consul that I wished to accompany him no matter what might be the result.

"Please allow me," I said, "to remain neutral and only be obliged to carry out your wishes when you have convinced the others that you are right."

Frequently he woke me up at night to make me promise to follow him everywhere, even though he might declare he did not wish me to do so. My state of health and the need of sleep, natural in a person of my age, caused me to become extremely impatient with him on these occasions, although I did my best to conceal the fact.

I pointed out to him gently that I was anxious to go to sleep. He did not pay much attention to this but kept on declaring that he was the unhappiest man in the world, that he adored me, that I evidently did not care for him as I refused to sacrifice my mother and my foolish ideas to him, that a woman does not have a miscarriage if she travels in a comfortable conveyance.

"I will follow you," I told him, "no matter what my mother and my doctor say, but should a misfortune occur at least let me have the consolation that it was a result of your orders, not through any fault of my own."

It never occurred to him to postpone his trip to Bareges and he left after having given up the idea of taking me with him. He wept freely when he bade me good-by. I was touched by his tears. Anyone who at that moment had said to me that I did not love my husband dearly would have seemed to me to be an enemy of mine. But a moment was enough to show me the true state of my feelings. I shall never forget the painful sensation I had when I heard the carriage roll away that was taking Louis from me; I felt I was breathing more freely.

"Great heavens," I exclaimed overcome with anguish, "the man who should be the soul of my soul, my husband, is leaving my side, and I am delighted! How guilty such a feeling is ! He is right, I do not love him." I burst into tears. As I did so I vowed that by my care for his comfort, my thoughtfulness on his behalf, by the most scrupulous obedience to his wishes I would try to make up to him for those sentiments my heart could not feel toward him.

I finally resolved to redeem as far as was in my power my crime, inevitable though it was, of not loving the man who did so little to arouse my sentiment.

During my husband's absence I stayed with my mother. My husband's cold and constrained letters showed me clearly enough he was unhappy, that his imagination had created a vision of happiness different from any I was able to offer him. Each time word came from him my heart beat violently, and each time I reproached myself for not knowing how to make him happy.

At the time a young Spanish girl was at school at Saint Germain. She was the daughter of Monsieur Hervas and would inherit a great fortune. The Consul had thought of a marriage between her and Colonel Duroc and told me to arrange matters. I was delighted to do so. Duroc had once shown he cared for me and I had not forgotten the fact. To help him be happy was a sign of my gratitude. One day when I was describing Mademoiselle Hervas' merits to him and speaking of the interest a young girl of thirteen inspired and how delightful a task it must be to make life pleasant for her he replied, "I realize my good fortune, but all of that does not console me for having lost you." This was the only word he ever uttered which reminded me of the past. In fact, I saw much more of his wife than I did of him. He always seemed to avoid me, fearing perhaps that the Consul might think that his affections for me would tempt him to betray the secrets which were confided to him.

When Mademoiselle Hervas was told that her husband had been in love with me, she said: "If he loved Hortense, that proves his good taste. If he had been loved by her that would have proved his merits." Her remark shows that she had been brought up at Saint Germain where everyone spoiled me. She never ceased to trust me implicitly, and I always felt strongly attached to her.

My greatest pleasure was still to return to Saint Germain to play and run about with my schoolfellows and sometimes even share their lessons. One day when I entered Madame Campan's room, proud of a prize I had just won, which I insisted on taking with me, I encountered one of the fashionable beauties of the aristocratic Faubourg Saint Germain. Madame Campan hastened to assure her that there was no need to be scandalized, that her other boarders did not have the more than matronly figure I possessed, that I was duly married but preferred the society of my former schoolfellows to the formal receptions at court. The noble dame could not hide her astonishment and failed to understand such childish tastes. The incident was talked about in Paris.

My husband wrote me about it and found fault with my behavior, while my mother lectured me on the danger of running about in such fashion in my condition. I was obliged to give up my visits to school.

Mother went to Plombieres for her health and left me to do the honors at Malmaison. All the young ladies who were staying there at the time were also expecting babies. We spent our mornings sitting together embroidering bonnets for the children we were about to have and talking about our plans for them. We did not go downstairs to the drawing-room till six o'clock. The Consul would come to dinner and in the evening, when he was not working, would play chess with me. He was so absent-minded that I always won, thereby acquiring a reputation of great skill. As a matter of fact, the Consul, not particularly good at chess, was always thinking more about other things than about the game. Usually not particularly courteous, serious rather than gay, he frightened all our young ladies, who only dared answer yes and no to the curt sentences in which he addressed them.

For this reason, my mother, although highly susceptible, was never alarmed by the idea that her husband was surrounded by pretty women.

On Sundays, singers would come out from Paris. Among them was a certain Mademoiselle Rolandieu, a pretty actress. I do not know whether the Consul paid any attention to her, but I received a letter from my mother filled with reproaches. She had heard, she said, that this actress had come to Malmaison. I should not have allowed it. Yet what did that have to do with me? My mother was hurt and did not weigh her words or acts.

She suddenly left Plombieres where she was taking the cure, and I have often heard the Consul blame her for having sacrificed the care of her health, the possibility perhaps of having children, to an impulse of ill-considered jealousy.

A dance was held at Malmaison for some holiday or other. I only danced once. The next day I saw in a newspaper verses describing my state of health and my dancing. I complained to Bourrienne about it. Praise under such circumstances was unwelcome to me, and disliked intensely those articles which told the public what I was doing. Bourrienne answered mysteriously, "Do not complain; it was probably printed on purpose. You have no idea of the despicableness of the English papers. It was perhaps necessary for the French press to refute them."

I failed to see the connection between some verses about me and the political situation. I begged him to explain. He refused to do so. It was not till long afterwards I found out that the English newspapers had declared I had been delivered of a child when I was only in my seventh month of pregnancy.

Meanwhile the time for the birth of my child drew near. The house I was living in was too small. The Consul gave me another one, very charming, also rather small and with a delightful garden. I moved in and awaited the return of my husband.

The birth of a child bearing the name of Bonaparte was an event of considerable interest to all of France. The Consul had been appointed Consul for life, but he had no son. The fact that he had restored order increased his popularity throughout France and seemed already to indicate on the part of the public a desire to invest the supreme power in his family.

Little means are frequently employed to prepare the public for important changes that are still far in the future. I was greatly surprised one day when my nurse came from her village to tell me that my child would be born in October and that a son of mine would someday rule over France. I laughed at her skill as fortune-teller and told her that as a matter of fact I did expect to become a mother in October. Delighted with the news she showed me a little almanac called "Mathieu Laensbergh," widely read in the country districts, which predicted the changes of the weather and notable events that would take place. According to this almanac a child would be born in October who would reign over the greatest country in Europe. The poor old woman had come to find out if I was about to fulfil this prophecy. I thought it likely that the prophet was a member of the secret police and I later learned that all governments use these humble means to create in people's minds impressions of one kind or another.

The maneuver in the present instance would later fit in with the announced intention of the Consul to adopt my son if I had one.

I had one preconceived opinion in regard to my health; namely, that unless a mother was bled during her period of pregnancy the child was apt to be sluggish in temperament and liable to catch serious diseases. Although in perfect health I kept bothering my doctor insisting on the need of this bleeding. Already, after a walk where I had been caught in the rain, I had had an incision made in my arm with a lancet, but the vein was so faintly visible that the surgeon had been obliged to make two incisions. This blood-letting, which might have proved harmless at another time, affected my nerves. As chance would have it my husband returned the same day it took place.

His unfriendly attitude upset me and made me unhappy. Though I was aware of the fact I no longer loved him, though I had already given up all hope of being happy myself, I still wished to make him happy, in spite of his far from optimistic character. I redoubled my efforts to achieve this end. All proved fruitless. Moreover, they did me harm in still further affecting the state of my health.

With my doctor I had calculated the moment when my child should be born. He told me that women often made mistakes of two and even three weeks, especially if it was a boy, that he would not be surprised if the event took place at a date he mentioned and which was about the first of October. As I had been married the third of January this would have made just three days less than nine months after my marriage. Greatly surprised and amused I hastened to tell this to my husband, but he replied gloomily, "If such a thing happened, I would not see you again as long as I lived."

"What," I exclaimed in despair, "can it be that you suspect me?"

"No, I know the truth. But it is on account of what people would say."

Imagine my fears and at the same time the delight with which I saw the first few days of October slip by. Although I was relieved of the fear of being publicly shamed by the man who should have been my natural protector, I suffered cruelly from his attitude. I felt that I was alone, deprived of any comforter on earth, with no source of help but such as I could find in my own heart, no other consolation except what my conscience was able to give me.

The Consul returned with my mother from a trip they had taken to Rouen and Havre. I went with them to the Louvre where there was an exposition, the first of its kind, of all the articles produced by French industry. The Consul Cambaceres gave me his arm, many foreigners were present and the crowd was very great. Easily tired I sat for a long while in one of the stalls where Monsieur Fox, who was just then in Paris, happened to be. The Consul had a great regard for this statesman.

The ninth of October was another large reception at the Tuileries. I attended it and on the tenth, just nine months after the date on which my husband and I withdrew to Malmaison was seized with such intense pains that my brother, who had come to see me, hurried off to get my mother. She arrived at Saint Cloud and took the tenderest care of me. Nor did my husband leave my side. Both were

overjoyed when at nine o'clock in the evening I gave birth to a boy.

My nurse and my attendants exclaimed "Look at our Dauphin." My husband did not like these exclamations and had them immediately silenced. He appeared much pleased that the child was a boy. Two days later the Consul came to see me. As for me my joy was inexpressibly intense. I did not allow my son's cradle to be taken out of the room for an instant. I always kept him on my bed. I looked at the sleeping child; I hung over his slumbering form. I regretted bitterly not being able to nurse him, but my husband and mother both opposed my wishes, pointing out how difficult it was to nurse a child before one was twenty. The welfare of my son must take precedence over everything. Indeed, had I been his nurse, I could not have tended him more constantly, more tenderly than I did. When I was well enough to get up again, if he was not able to go out, I stayed at home. I was unhappy the moment he and I were separated. My husband worshiped him as much as I did. As he was following a treatment just then that did not allow him to go out, the child was obliged to be always in his room. The baby was the only bright spot in our home, which otherwise was as bare and cold as ever. Adele came occasionally to see me in the morning. She was my only companion.

The Consul's aides-de-camp had of course noticed that their visits to me were not welcome from the fact they were always told I was not at home. They accused me of being over proud, as though I were responsible for this state of things; they considered that it was my position, which was daily becoming more important, which prevented me from receiving them with as much friendliness as I had done previously. However painful such an opinion was to me I bore it well enough. I preferred to be misjudged rather than reveal to others a jealousy which, so it seemed to me, would have made both my husband and me look ridiculous. Nevertheless, the officers' young wives still looked on me as a friend and advisor, and on several occasions, I reunited husband and wife who were temporarily estranged.

If I told my husband about these things in order to keep him informed of everything I was doing, he looked displeased. The deference, the consideration in which I was held were disagreeable to him.

Once the Consul called with my mother. Annoyed at not finding my husband at home he said nothing and walked about alone in the garden. My mother informed me that he came intending to ask for our son, whom he intended to adopt. This idea startled me but being prepared to trust the future of our child to Providence I dared not formulate any objection. In the evening Caroline told me the rest of the Bonaparte family on being informed of the Consul's idea had opposed it vigorously, declaring that his brothers had more claim to succeed him than my son and that they were prepared to defend these claims.

How many enemies already arrayed against a poor child still in its cradle! I spoke of this to my husband, who assured me he would never give up his son. He showed me a letter in which he announced this to the Consul, at the same time advising the latter to obtain a divorce as the only means of arranging matters. I felt worried about my husband, perturbed about my mother, who that evening looked sad and downhearted.

She, also, told me that all his family were advising the Consul to repudiate her. The Consul for the first time treated me like a grown-up person, spoke to me about his wish to adopt an heir and

seemed hurt at my husband's attitude. I asked him not to oblige me to take sides on such a question and to allow me to obey a husband who was perhaps justly alarmed to see so much antagonism centering about his child. The Consul said nothing for a moment, then broke the silence with the remark, "I shall pass a law that will give me authority over my family."

As Louis feared to spend the winter in Paris on account of his health, it was decided we should go to Italy. The Consul gave his consent to the plan on condition that our journey take place with a certain amount of state. The ladies who were to receive me in each town had already been chosen, the gifts I was to make them had already been bought, the moment of our departure had come. My mother had chosen as my lady in waiting Madame de Boubers, daughter of the Chevalier de Folard, who lost her fortune in the Revolution. She was noted for her courage and her high moral standards. My husband detested having anyone stay with us. It was useless for me to point out to him that our social position made this inevitable.

He constantly accused his brother of wishing to annoy him; he could not understand why people should not be allowed to travel as they pleased. When the question of taking his son with us came up, and the Consul objected to it on account of the child's extreme youth, Louis was unable to restrain his anger. All these petty trifles made him so unhappy that I did not know what to do to pacify him. The idea of leaving his son in the care of his brother excited him violently.

Finally, the tears he saw me shed, as the moment approached, when I should be separated from the child I loved so dearly, seemed to make him decide to give up the trip to Italy and instead go to Montpellier alone in order to consult the physicians there. He explained to me in an entirely natural manner that he was only leaving me behind in order that his son should not leave home. The reason seemed a good one to me. I accepted the suggestion. Was this intended as a trap? Later he reproached me for it. He misinterpreted the tears a mother shed at the thought of leaving her son. He declared it was clear I did not love him since I had not accompanied him, but had preferred to stay with my child.

Yet it was he who had proposed this arrangement. Nevertheless, he wrote affectionately enough, but his letters were full of sentences, of pieces of advice, which I could not understand. When he was leaving, he forbade me very solemnly to go to live at Saint Cloud under any pretext when the Consul and my mother went there, and never to stay there overnight. I objected that my mother would find such conduct rather extraordinary and asked what excuse I could give for it.

"You have no reason to give an excuse," he replied.

"You are no longer a child. A married woman should stay at home. You can go and have dinner there, but if you spend the night, I warn you I will divorce you."

I was unable to obtain any explanation. I kept thinking how I was to behave, what explanation I could give my mother, who would certainly wish me to stay with her.

Finally, I thought I had found a way out. I arranged to take a great many lessons, so that all my mornings were occupied by my singing, my painting, my harp or my piano.

I went to dinner at Saint Cloud with my son, who never left me, and I returned in the evening in order not to miss my lesson the next morning. My mother did not dare object although several times she saw me drive off in very bad weather in spite of her entreaties that I remain.

It happened one day that the Consul while attempting to drive a six-horse coach met with an accident and was thrown a distance of twenty paces. My mother's alarm was so great that it upset her nerves.

She begged me to remain with her. What was I to do? Torn between the threats of my husband, the entreaties of my mother, between fear and filial duty, I did not know what decision to make when my mother burst into tears and exclaimed, "My daughter no longer loves me."

"It is easy enough to understand," added the Consul, "Hortense is enjoying herself in Paris. We are old, our company bores her." I was in agony. The thought that my mother could imagine that I no longer loved her and that I would sacrifice the joy of nursing her for some frivolous amusement was so utterly unbearable that I threw caution to the winds and told all about my husband's command.

"What is that?" said the Consul standing up suddenly. "Your husband issued such an order? What can be his reasons for it? Does he get his information from the English slander sheets? Write him that a husband cannot separate a daughter from her mother. When her husband is away where is a wife's place if not beside her natural protector? A woman as blameless as you has the right to speak her mind firmly and not to accept such ridiculous restrictions."

It did not take long for me to become conscious of the mistake I had made in revealing my secret. On the one hand, the Consul's anger against Louis worried me dreadfully; on the other, my mother, who was incapable of keeping any of her feelings to herself, went about complaining to the ladies in waiting about Louis' strange idea of forbidding me to live near her. The public soon heard about it and drew its own conclusions.

People are never interested in the truth. The new and bizarre are what appeal to the crowd of idlers who make up society. My husband, who had word that I had not obeyed his orders, wrote me only cold, distant notes.

A journey through Belgium which my mother and the Consul undertook finally put an end to this painful situation. As they were leaving, two young men, members of the Tascher family and cousins of my mother, arrived from Martinique.

She did not have the slightest idea what to do with them and asked me to look after the new arrivals. I took care of the younger, who was not in good health. As for the older, who was already eighteen, I was prudent enough not to ask him to stay at our home. I already knew my husband's character too well.

The young man was housed in our old house and came to see me every day. The Consul's aides-de-camp, who on this occasion were leaving their young wives for the first time, confided them to my care with that confidence they always felt toward me. The ladies came and spent the day at my home regularly.

Their children, who were about the same age as mine, came with them and formed our principal topic of conversation. Frequently we would all go together to a play or for a walk, and afterwards each one would take her darling back with her. We also visited the suburbs of Paris 23 [accompanied by Monsieur Auguié, the father of Adele, and my two cousins]. I felt myself so thoroughly responsible for the conduct of my young ladies that at a party given by Madame de Luray at Montmorency I ventured to blame one of them for her provocative attitude toward a young Russian who was trying to make himself too agreeable to all of us.

I reminded her of her husband, of her duties, and she listened to my advice as though it had been that of her mother. Indeed, never have gatherings been more innocent and pure than ours were; our only interests consisted in caring for our babies and receiving letters from the travelers.

I still possess the little account Colonel Savary wrote us describing all the receptions offered the Consul and my mother on their trip. The behavior and charm of these young women were so widely spoken of that they aroused the jealousy of certain Parisian beauties. Madame Hamelin, noted and feared for her biting wit, replied to someone who was praising the morals of the Consul's court, "What else can you expect? All these young women have just been married. They adore their husbands. There's little enough merit in that. Wait a few years before forming an opinion and then you may tell a different tale."

We were indignant on being told Madame Hamelin's prophecy. Each declared she would prove the cynic was mistaken. As a matter of fact, only one of the group ever was talked about, and she, I admit, was precisely the one who had been flirting at Montmorency.

The Consul and my mother returned from Belgium after having been received everywhere with demonstrations of great joy and enthusiasm. I continued dining daily with my son at the Tuileries.

The Consul made him sit in the middle of the table and let him touch everything. He gave him wine and coffee and though he frequently made the child cry by pinching his cheek or by kissing him too hard, he knew how to win his affection.

Every time the Consul entered the drawing-room my son would stretch out his arms toward him. This seemed to please my stepfather, and even when he was most preoccupied his face would brighten at the sight of his nephew. Once, when a morning reception was being held in my mother's apartment, where the ladies at that time were presented to the Consul before being admitted to one of the formal receptions, we waited several moments for him to come downstairs. My son was in his nurse's arms.

The Consul came in looking very preoccupied, which made us think that the conversation would not be a long one. My son, who was tired of staying in one spot, held out his arms. The Consul noticed this, took him from the nurse and continued to walk back and forth. We watched him. He seemed so absent-minded that we feared he would forget the precious burden he was carrying.

However, after a little while he handed the baby back to the nurse still without having said a word. Annoyed at being quiet once more the little boy began to cry and once more stretched out his arms. The Consul picked him up again, and this performance lasted half an hour without a word having been spoken.

Finally, a message came that the ambassadors were waiting. We entered the drawing-room. The Consul spoke a few words to the ladies, but he soon stepped up to Whitworth, the English Ambassador, and the entire room heard the bitter reproaches with which he assailed him.

He spoke of the treaties the English had violated, of the bad faith of the government. I cannot recall his expressions but the tone in which they were spoken made everyone silent with surprise and fear.

His anger had made him forget the presence of other people. My mother continued talking to the ladies and attempted to cover his voice by affectionate words in order to palliate the disagreeable effects she feared so violent a discussion would produce.

On his return to his study the Consul seemed to have shaken off a heavy burden. His anger had vanished. It was I and my mother who now looked worried.

"Well," he said, almost jokingly, "what is the matter? What has happened?" My mother reproved him gently, saying, "You frightened everybody. What will the ladies who did not know you, who had been so happy to have the opportunity to meet you, think of you now? Instead of being pleasant and polite to them, you insist on talking politics. It really wasn't the moment for that."

"Do you mean to say they heard me?" continued the Consul. "It's true I made a mistake. I did not want to come down today. Talleyrand had been telling me things that annoyed me, and then that long, lank idiot (Flandrin) of an ambassador stuck himself right under my nose."

All Paris heard of the scene that had just taken place. It marked the end of the peace. Hostilities were renewed shortly afterward.

By way of retaliation for the English having seized French frigates without warning the Consul gave orders to arrest all Englishmen who happened to be traveling in France and hold them as prisoners of war.

This action seemed so unfair to us that we were deeply grieved about it. We were not able to conceal from my stepfather our sorrow at seeing him act in such a way.

"You should have nothing to do with actions which are not just and noble," declared my mother. He took her in his arms and embraced her as he replied, "You are children both of you."

The Consul was more susceptible to criticism than he cared to admit. As he was in the habit of giving matters mature consideration before making any decision, the decision once made remained inflexible.

Yet, if his plans did not coincide with that narrow line of conduct which commands popular approval, they seemed to him to be unsatisfactory, and he attempted to remedy this weakness by assuming a very stern air. If his wishes were carried out, then the severer he had been before, the more gracious he became afterwards.

This was the moment to ask him for favors. For then he felt he could grant any request without appearing overindulgent, the one thing he was always afraid of. At such times, his one desire was to be obliging and to make you forget his severity.

My mother, who saw him one day in one of these good-natured moods, asked permission for a young Englishman [who had done our family some favors in Martinique to be allowed to remain in Paris.

He granted her request. Encouraged by her success, I in turn asked the Consul to intervene on behalf of another Englishman who, so I was told, was unhappy at being shut up at Fontainebleau.

Immediately both orders were written by Eugene, who happened to be present, and signed by the Consul himself. A fortunate incident in the case of our proteges, who were never afterwards disturbed in any way by the authorities.

Shortly afterwards, my husband returned from Montpellier, still cold towards me and giving me no reason for this attitude. This disagreeable state of things, regrettable and uncomfortable though it was, was still preferable to those continual reproaches which had disturbed my nights and saddened my days.

The love I felt toward my son was enough to fill my heart, nor did I any longer venture to complain of my fate since I had someone on whom I could shower my tender and boundless affection.

Had I been passionately in love with my husband, a little natural pride and self-respect might have made me accept for a long time the kind of life I was obliged to put up with. But the memory of his tears, the sad knowledge that I feared him instead of loving him made me unwilling to continue a state of things which was perhaps still more painful to him than to me. The more satisfied I felt at being left alone, the more I considered it my duty to try to meet him halfway. But what an effort it was to make the first step! What could I talk about to a man whose severe, cold manner seemed to be both a reproach and an indictment? The very vehemence of my repulsion gave me strength to overcome it.

Whenever I feel that a thing ought to be done, no matter what it may involve in the way of suffering for me, a violent impulse helps me to perform it. It was this that enabled me to approach my

husband and tell him that he was risking both his happiness and my own, that his continual doubts as to my affection were both a mistake and an insult. The reluctance with which I took this step, my uneasiness of mind, all combined to make me shed tears which might have been attributed to unrequited affection.

Louis was touched, nevertheless he replied, "We shall remain apart. I am happier like that." I do not know what was going on in his mind, but in spite of the tenderness he displayed he hurried off, seemingly extremely agitated. I remained alone, as pleased with myself as if I had performed the most heroic deed that has ever been accomplished. My conscience was at rest.

No longer could I be held responsible for our disagreements. When I saw my husband the next day, I astonished him by my calmness. He kept glancing at me frequently, expecting to find some trace of sorrow on my face, but all he could see there was the serenity that comes from a clear conscience.

Busying myself continually with my son, I laughed and danced about with him and did not appear more chagrined in any way than before we had had our talk. Several days passed. Finally, Louis announced to me that his mind was made up and he wished to be reconciled with me. At the time this only appeared strange to me, but since then, having become familiar with his unfortunate, constantly distrustful state of mind, I realize that my advances had aroused suspicions which my subsequent calmness had dispelled. "You assured me," " I replied, "you were happy away from me. I cannot forget this. Let us be friends but do not talk of a reconciliation."

He left me angrily and hastened to announce to his family that he wished a divorce. When they heard this piece of news, my brother, my mother, the Consul, Lucien, everybody sought to bring us together again, and thanks to their combined efforts a reconciliation was once more arrived at. Louis' only just cause for complaint was that I did not love him sufficiently.

He was greatly annoyed at an event which took place about this time—his appointment as brigadier general. I have never seen a man worry so much about anything as Louis did about this matter.

He kept accusing his brother of offending him on purpose. The same scene took place when he was made a member of the Council of State. It was useless for me to point out, by way of consolation, that it was quite natural for his brother to act as he did, nor could the latter be expected to realize that Louis would dislike a promotion which would have delighted so many other men.

All these arguments had no effect. He was fond of the regiment which he commanded and was so deeply grieved at the idea of leaving it that the Consul allowed him to remain in command in spite of his new rank. His brigade was stationed at Compiegne and it was there we went to spend the winter.

I took with me my son and Madame de Boubers. The reviews, the beautiful balls, the receptions which were given in my honor were the only notable incidents of our stay.

I had been so much in the habit of seeing my mother entertain at our house that I was accustomed to act as hostess. No one compared with her in the art of making some pleasant,

appropriate remark to each guest. With such a good model before me, I had learned how to attend to other people's enjoyment. To do so, indeed, was one of the duties of my position.

I realized the fact and tried to perform my task to the best of my ability. All the local nobility, the government officials and the military authorities called on me regularly. I made a point of speaking to each guest without making any distinctions, questioning even the minor officers about their campaigns.

These acts of mere politeness displeased my husband. I was obliged to refrain from them. The Consul knew that I was popular at Compiegne. He wished me to arrange a marriage which he had heard talked about. A thing like that would have produced a good effect.

The Consul was prepared to offer the dowry himself. The bridegroom was to be some soldier who had won a girl's heart in spite of his lack of wealth. My husband would never let me have anything to do with this matter. He disliked everything that made me conspicuous. His attitude made me feel uncomfortable even when I was doing good, for a good action on my part shocked him as much as another's misdeed.

While we were at Compiegne, I was expecting my second child. Louis often said to me, "I ask only one thing, to have this baby look like me."

"What can I do about that?" I would reply.

"If you loved me, if you thought often enough about me, he would look like me. Then I would adore you and be the happiest man in all the world." I could not help smiling at the solemn manner in which this was expressed, nevertheless the importance he attached to it sometimes worried me in view of the future.

However, his wish was fulfilled, but he was not able to realize it till much later, for it is unusual for a child at birth to have any clearly defined resemblance to anyone.

The conspiracy of George made us return suddenly to Paris. The city wore a new aspect. It seemed as though it had been placed under martial law. The Consul's guards were stationed at intervals around the walls. People did not go walking beyond the gates. The Parisians were interested in the new state of things. They were curious, surprised, but neither alarmed nor displeased although the new rules deprived them of some of their usual amusements.

They were aware that only the conspirators were being sought by the police. In town, receptions and balls followed one another as usual. Every night after having made their tour of inspection, the officers came back and danced as though nothing were disturbing the public peace. After a time all the conspirators had been arrested. General Murat had just been made military governor of Paris. Shortly after my marriage, I had been fairly intimate with Madame Moreau, the daughter of Madame Hulot, who owned property in Ile de France.

She was pretty and gifted but rather affected and even stiff in her manner. Her chief characteristic was her ambition. I remember one day how after making numerous excuses for refusing an invitation to a ball which she was urging me to attend, I finally told her that my husband would not care to have me go.

She expressed her surprise at such a submissive attitude and declared she thought I was wrong in being so obedient, that it would never occur to General Moreau to forbid her such an innocent form of amusement.

Her mother, who was present, added, "When a woman knows how to manage matters, she can make her husband do as she likes. Ah, our household is better run than yours is, that's evident."

I mention this remark because I believe that in Moreau's conspiracy the General was influenced by his mother-in-law. Her daughter's marriage had turned Madame Hulot's head. She fancied that he was entitled to all the honors that were to be had.

Although the Consul was the leading citizen of the Republic, she felt in a position to treat him disdainfully.

Once she came to Malmaison without having been invited. Her son-in-law at the time was in command of the army on the Rhine. The Consul, whose attitude never lent itself to any familiarities, was astonished by this conduct. I do not know whether he knew of the remarks made about him in Moreau's household, but when he entered the drawing-room he merely bowed to Madame Hulot without speaking to her.

At dinner where I, not yet being married, was in the habit of giving up my seat beside my stepfather to any distinguished guest, he asked me and another lady to sit on either side of him.

Madame Hulot remained alone at the end of the table. Although my mother spoke to her frequently and attempted to dispel the unpleasant effect of the Consul's chilling reception, she did not succeed.

Madame Hulot was so vexed that in the evening she could not refrain from saying, "The great man really has very little control over his feelings."

From that day on, she hated the Consul. Perhaps it was in spite of himself that Moreau became my stepfather's enemy. His mother-in-law and his wife had played upon his naturally weak and yielding nature. He had the reputation of being a stanch supporter of the Republic at a time when, as a matter of fact, he was conspiring with the enemies of France.

This reputation was shared by those hostile to the Consul, and yet, with the exception of Carnot and Lafayette, who were really sincere in their devotion to the republican form of government, I did not know of any so-called republicans who did not rally to support his cause so long as it was successful. It was when changes threatened that they remembered they were sons of the Revolution and complained

of having been enslaved.

An example of the mentality of Napoleon's enemies may be seen in the case of Moreau when he declared he would present his cook a "saucepan of honor" to ridicule the Consul's fine gesture when he distributed "swords of honor" among his troops."

The receptions of Madame Moreau were reputed to be the most fashionable in Paris. She gave sumptuous balls which were attended by all the nobility of the Faubourg Saint Germain, and was on intimate terms with persons known to hate the existing government. When General Moreau was arrested, cries of indignation were raised throughout the Faubourg. The Consul was accused of being jealous of his ability, and the conspirators found many sympathizers.

I am well aware that political crimes always deserve a certain amount of indulgence. But surely our moral sense must refuse to condone those which involve the assassination of a human being.

The principal persons involved in this conspiracy were the Generals Moreau, Lajolais, Pichegrus, George, and Messieurs de Polignac and de Riviere. The two last, just back from England and prominent on account of their families, talked as if the killing of the Consul were something any gentleman should take part in.

This view prevailed in a number of salons. Consequently, their death sentence was received with astonishment. Perhaps opinions held by sincere fanatics are especially contagious, or perhaps the fact that the Consul was safe caused me to pity those who were about to die. At any rate, the sentences pronounced filled me with grief. Our every thought was how we might secure their repeal. It was agreed that I should take the daughter of General Lajolais to Saint Cloud with me, while Caroline did the same with the sister of another of the condemned men.

The two girls were to throw themselves at the feet of the Consul and plead for the culprit. I cannot yet describe without emotion the feeling that oppressed me. The memory of my father's death on the scaffold, with no one intervening on his behalf, haunted me and made me pity yet more the unfortunate girl who accompanied me.

The hope of saving a man from such a fate, the fear of failure moved me to such an extent that when we arrived at Saint Cloud, I was all in tears, a thousand times more wrought up than my young companion, who looked at me in astonishment. Passers-by might indeed have made a mistake as to which of us was about to plead for her father's life. My mother was worried as to the effect these scenes would have on my health. The Consul was touched and hastened to my prayer. Caroline was also successful with her protégé. My mother had taken upon herself the defense of those who were the most guilty. The Consul resisted in the case of Messieurs de Polignac and de Riviere.

They had been the aides-de-camp of the Comte d'Artois and were especially sent from England to assassinate the head of the French Government. He thought that clemency in this instance would encourage similar expeditions in the future.

My mother, however, kept bringing up the matter until her very evident grief obtained what his political wisdom refused. Moreau had not been condemned to death.

His wife begged that he be allowed to go to America and came to see me about this. She was unhappy, I pitied her distress, and the Consul agreed to everything without raising any objections.

My house was very close to that of Caroline, who had bought the Thelusson mansion in the rue Cerutti. My husband and I went there every day. One evening Caroline said to me sadly, "They have just taken the Duc d'Enghien to the fortress of Vincennes. His trial will take place tonight."

This news chilled me with horror. Kept in ignorance of all political happenings, we could not understand the reasons for this arrest. Nevertheless, the fact that a member of the former French royal family should have been kidnaped, brought to Paris, and tried by night seemed to us a sinister event.

That this act of severity should take place under the rule of the Consul who had dried so many tears, bound up so many wounds, filled us with grief on his account. To us Bonaparte seemed too great to be obliged to do things of this sort. The next day I went to Malmaison early. I found my mother overcome with alarm.

She had just heard that the Duc d'Enghien had been shot that morning at daybreak. Her grief was intense, not only for the victim but also for the Consul.

"This is the first mistake Napoleon has made," she said. "Till now his fame has been so stainless. Who can have advised him to do this? Had I known of it soon enough, I should have prevented him. His sorrowful air when he told me the news proved to me that it was not he who had given the order.

When he saw my tears he exclaimed vehemently, do you want to see me assassinated?"

"My mother kept repeating over and over again, "Who can have influenced him?" I said nothing and shared her emotions.

Just then Caulaincourt entered the room. He had been away on a mission to Strasbourg and Karlsruhe, and had only that moment returned. "You have heard the dreadful news?" my mother asked him.

What news, madame?"

"The Duc d'Enghien has been executed."

"Great God" exclaimed Caulaincourt.

"Can that be true? Has the Consul involved me in some way in the matter?"

Tears flowed down his cheeks. "But where have you been?" inquired my mother.

"On a mission near Strasbourg, delivering a letter to Karlsruhe. That is all I know about it."

"When I heard that you were off to the Rhine," replied my mother, "I feared you had been employed on some such disastrous mission."

"Would to God I had been!" exclaimed Caulaincourt.

"I would have had the young Prince warned. I cannot forget that I was once in his service, that I was one of his gentlemen in waiting, and if the Consul had given me such an order, I should only have carried it out by saving the Prince's life."

I heard every word of what I am recording. How did it happen therefore that the public should have so insistently accused Caulaincourt of having led the Prince into a trap?

Is it more difficult to believe the truth than falsehood? I here add what else I learned in regard to this matter.

A royalist insurgent condemned to death had, in order to save his own life, confessed everything he knew about the conspiracy. He declared that Moreau had seen George in Paris and likewise another person whom he did not know but whom everyone treated with the greatest respect.

At the time this person was thought to be a prince of the house of Bourbon. The Duc d'Enghien lived near the Rhine, he was frequently away from home, and he was in communication with the Consul's enemies in France; assassins crossed over from England and landed on the seacoast; the Consul's life was constantly being threatened.

Those who had taken part in the Revolution feared the return of the family it had driven from the throne. They were now in office, and a change would threaten their position.

All these motives combined to bring about the arrest of the Duke. General Ordener crossed the river in rowboats with a strong detachment of troops (it was he himself who told me about it).

He brought the Duc d'Enghien to Paris. The court which tried him was composed of several colonels and presided over by General Hulin. Savary attended the trial only as a spectator. He was not one of the judges, but his regiment being stationed at Vincennes, his going there was a precautionary measure.

General Murat, Governor of Paris, had given orders to that effect. He received them from Monsieur de Talleyrand, with whom he remained until four o'clock in the morning.

Colonel Savary, while on his way to Malmaison to report what had taken place, met Real, the Prefect of Police, whom the Consul had ordered to go and question the prisoner.

Real was much astonished to learn that the prisoner was already dead. Savary found the Consul still more deeply moved than Real at the news of this sudden execution. He exclaimed, according to Savary, "This was a useless crime," and did not again refer to it.

The drawing-rooms of Paris reechoed with imaginary details about the Consul and Caulaincourt. The latter, so people said, had brought the Prince to Paris in his own carriage and had treated him in a shameful manner.

The Consul was supposed to have ordered the Duke shot with a lantern on his heart and without allowing him to express his last wishes.

All these tales were false, and evidently came from Monsieur de Talleyrand, who in order to avoid attracting suspicion to himself spread loathsome details in the hope that the action might seem less important on account of the horrors that accompanied it.

The firmly established rank of Monsieur de Talleyrand's family, as well as his former intimate relation with aristocratic circles, had always given him an immense influence throughout the Faubourg Saint-Germain. Minister during the Republic, Minister during the Consulate, Minister during the Empire, renegade priest who had taken a wife, everything he did was regarded favorably.

He obtained full and complete absolution for all his acts. Consequently no one thought of blaming him for the death of the Duc d'Enghien, of which he was one of the principal instigators, whereas Caulaincourt and Savary, who were innocent, were unhesitatingly condemned.

My mother repeated to me something the Emperor had said one day when he was angry with Talleyrand: "I find it amusing to see him gaining popularity at my expense. Was it I who knew the Duc d'Enghien? Was it I who wanted to have him executed?"

My knowledge of the Emperor's character convinces me that although the suddenness of the execution took him by surprise, he never sought to exonerate himself. Since the weakness he was the least willing to admit was lack of will-power, he would have said: "If I did such a thing it was because I had the right to do so."

I might add in support of this opinion these words of his which were repeated to me: "Has any family the right to commit crimes without being punished for them? All the conspirators received a fair trial. I pardoned many of those who sought to kill me, but I could not pardon all those who sought to betray France by bringing back the conditions which ruined her."

For that matter, it was at this time that all the men who had helped bring about the Revolution rallied about the Consul. "He will never prove a Monk," they declared.

"He has proved that. He can be trusted." It was later that I learned these various details, whose significance I leave to my readers' judgment.

To us the Duc d'Enghien, cut off thus in the bloom of his youth, appeared a pathetic victim of a political situation we did not understand but whose results grieved us bitterly. All these incidents contributed to bring about an event of great importance.

The future fate of France, which the Consul had established on firmer ground, seemed to be linked to his career and to depend on his existence. The only thing lacking to make the future safe was permanent stability. To achieve this, the Empire was established. The Consul was appointed Emperor of the French Republic [May 18, 1804].

A new dynasty was created which consisted only of Joseph, Louis and their children. Lucien was excluded because he had just married a woman who did not please the Consul and whom he had given his word of honor not to marry. The birth of a son caused him to forget his promise and brave his brother's anger. In connection with this, Caroline and I received a severe rebuke from my stepfather. It was while the latter was on a trip to Boulogne that Lucien took advantage of the opportunity to get married and to announce the fact to all his family and to my mother.

The latter had remained at Saint Cloud and felt she should not take any steps toward receiving Lucien's wife without having been authorized by the Consul to do so. My husband, on the other hand, declared, "Joseph is the eldest of us all. Whatever he chooses to do I will do also!" Without consulting the Consul, whose violent opposition to the match we nevertheless suspected, the marriage was publicly admitted. The reason given was that it had already taken place.

Lucien came to see us with his wife, who was really remarkably beautiful. I, in my position, could not do otherwise than follow my husband's example. Consequently, I did as he wished. But the Consul on his return, having heard that we had acted in this way, reproached both his brothers. What he may have said to the others I cannot tell, but one morning when Caroline and I were with my mother he flew into a temper with us such as I have never seen him in before.

He reproved us for having given the name of "sister" to a woman whose reputation was not unblemished. He told us that not only had we failed in the obedience due him as head of the family, but also we had lacked self-respect.

"See what this means" he exclaimed as he walked about the drawing-room without even looking at us. I attempt to establish better public morality, and such a woman is accepted as a member of my family. I am the head of a nation to which I am responsible, not only for my own actions but also for those of the people about me whose example may be followed. I will not allow things to occur which give an excuse for imitating the vices rather than the virtues which the masses have a right to expect from those whom they have placed in authority and whom they obey. The people of France are essentially moral. The leaders of France must be the same. The country was ruled too long by nobles who believed they could do as they pleased. Those who are not with me are against me. I have duties to perform and I will perform them. I shall be pitiless." (Jerome, following Lucien's example, had married without the Consul's permission a young American girl from the United States. My mother intervened on their behalf, but the Consul remained inflexible, saying that those members of his family who did not recognize him as its head ceased to belong to it.)

CHAPTER V
PRINCESS LOUIS (1804-1806)

Establishment of the Empire—The Home-Life of Princess Louis—Some Lunatics—Monsieur de Flahaut—The Birth of Napoleon Louis—The Emperor and Madame Duchatel—Louis' Jealousy—A Visit to the Camp at Boulogne—Royal Marriages—An Innocent Prank.

WAS the Consul right or wrong in establishing the Empire? This is a question which I do not consider myself qualified to discuss. I can only record what I saw myself.

All political parties supported his action. The men who were the most uncompromising in their opinions, namely the republicans, did not blush to give their allegiance to the Empire.

Although the determined character of Napoleon might make them feel that their idol Liberty was in danger, at any rate his newly established dynasty was a symbol of that other idol of theirs, Equality. Under the rule of a man who owed his rank entirely to his own abilities, only those who deserved promotion were likely to achieve distinction.

Then, too, the rewards which a sovereign can bestow completely won over those who considered such distinctions as they received to be their just due. The nobility also sought and found a state of security in the shadow of the throne. Their familiarity with court-life and their greater social refinement won for them successes which were important enough to arouse jealousy.

Such jealousy was groundless. The Emperor, who wished to end the conditions existing under the Revolution while preserving the good it had accomplished, and at the same time to efface the memory of its excesses, was not in a position to banish the nobility.

The nobles, in spite of their faults, belonged to that class of French citizens who on account of their misfortunes must be protected. Napoleon always maintained the balance between the classes, without restoring to the nobility either their privileges or their influence in public affairs.

As for foreign sovereigns, they looked upon this re-establishment of royal government as a sort of guarantee of stability, since it was in keeping with the prevailing system of government in Europe, a system menaced by democratic theories.

Consequently, they were prepared for an instant to suspend hostilities toward a country which was no longer internally divided against itself. In short, the only enemies left were England, animated by a spirit of rivalry, a few royalists clinging to their memories of former times, and a few stubborn republicans. It will be difficult to believe that, important as these new events were in my life, I was so little interested by them.

My domestic sorrows increased from day to day. What could I do to make a man happy who did not know the meaning of that word? I still hoped to succeed; my life, my days revolved about this

problem; nothing else mattered. Therefore, I was very much surprised when one day Caroline came in to see me and for the first time I heard that the Consul was about to be made Emperor.

"People say," she added, "that only Joseph and Louis are mentioned as members of the new dynasty in the decree of the Senate. Can that mean that your children will be princes, heirs to the throne of France, and my children, their cousins, will be nobodies? I will never endure such injustice. I will bring them up to demand their rights, to reconquer them if necessary."

I could not sympathize greatly with Caroline's outburst, since her husband was, after all, only the Consul's brother-in-law, but I realized that such a law would make enemies for my children. The idea worried me. In vain, by way of consolation, did I express my doubts as to the accuracy of the reports. Nothing would quiet her. Her sister Elisa also shared her opinions and encouraged them.

They made such a fuss that their complaints finally reached the ears of the Consul, who one day made the remark: "Really, if you believed my sisters, you would think that I had robbed my family of the heritage of the late King, our father."

This epigram was repeated all over Paris, and people found it very witty. In the meanwhile, the Emperor's sisters were made princesses and had each her maison d'honneur similar to mine and that of the Princess Joseph.

One morning when I went to see my mother at Saint Cloud, I found her surrounded by various officials who were paying their respects to her as Empress of France. Then and then only did I discover that Caroline's fears were justified.

I cannot yet understand how so important an event made so little impression on me. Doubtless partly because it made slight difference in my social position, which was already so prominent, doubtless too because I was entirely wrapped up in my private troubles.

It was necessary, nevertheless, to receive all the officials and the foreign ambassadors who called to present the congratulations of their masters.

The idea that henceforward I should address all the crowned heads of Europe as "cousin" did not flatter my vanity any more than the finding of an appropriate reply to all these compliments worried me. When in some vast drawing-room where all eyes were fixed on me, I felt nervous, but in private receptions I always knew how to banish the shyness of others.

I must make one exception to this remark, my rather extraordinary first interview with the Prince-Primate of the Confederation of the Rhine. I was waiting for him in my main reception-room when a fire broke out in another part of the house. My son's room was directly over the place where the fire started. I dashed upstairs and brought him down with me. Meanwhile the blaze had been extinguished.

The Prince arrived, but as I spoke to him, I felt all my emotion, all the effort I had made to conceal my alarm from the child's nurse overcome me, and I burst into tears.

My guest was extremely astonished. The more he sought to find out the cause for my grief, the less able I became to answer his question. Afterwards we frequently laughed heartily together over his strange reception.

The only change I was conscious of as a result of our new rank was an increased severity on the part of my husband, who made etiquette and propriety excuses for keeping at a distance all our friends and acquaintances. One of the two young Americans, the Tascher boys, who were cousins of my mother, had been sent to a boarding-school.

The other, the elder, was taller, kind and gentle, but not particularly intelligent. He had enlisted in the Imperial Guard. No effort was made to prevent him from beginning at the bottom of the ladder. The Emperor was particularly severe in his criticism of members of his own family. He thought that he already had shown favoritism in not putting the boy into one of the regular infantry regiments. The poor lad, forced to go out early in the morning, found it hard that an American, especially a cousin of the Empress of France, should have to begin his career under such painful conditions, which however were slightly improved by his being allowed to come and see us occasionally.

In connection with this, I must mention a characteristic bit of jealousy on the part of my husband. An American wrote me that if he did not immediately obtain twenty-five Louis, he would drown himself in the Seine. I sent for my cousin to see what was to be done. He was out at the time. That same evening in the presence of my mother and my husband I spoke to my cousin privately in my small drawing-room asking him to look into the matter and deliver the money. As I had forgotten the letter it was agreed that early the next morning my cousin should stop at our house for it on his way to barracks. This was certainly a very innocent secret, which I would have told my husband had he questioned me, but having heard from other people that Tascher had called the next day before we were awake, he forbade the young man to come again to the house.

For some time, I was unable to understand why my husband when he got up peered into all the drawing-rooms and closed all the doors before going to his own part of the house. But I soon learned the reason. One day my maid came to me in tears, saying she had been locked in her room, that she was aware my husband was suspicious of her, but an honest woman could not be expected to put up with such treatment. I could not succeed in quieting her; she felt herself to have been more insulted by such suspicions than I was.

Soon however she relented and exclaimed, "Ah, madame, don't think that I, who have been with you ever since you came out of boarding-school at Saint-Germain, who know you better than anyone else in the world, am not aware of all you suffer in silence. Your courage has won my respectful admiration. It is only on your account that I stay a day longer in a house where people dare accuse me of misbehavior."

This maid was a woman of good family from Saint-Quentin. Before coming to me she had served only in the household of Mademoiselle Orleans. She had not been able to follow the latter abroad, and Madame de Montesson had given her to me when I left Saint-Germain. Her brother was a captain in the Guards with an excellent record. Her words, together with the strange behavior of my husband, made me realize at last that his distrust of me was of a most insulting kind.

Never before had I been willing to admit this fact. It grieved me and at the same time hurt my pride. I, who loved virtue Passionately, believed that my character was safe from any such suspicions. What means could be employed to regain in my husband's eyes that stainless reputation to which I attached so much value? I set myself to accomplish his by scrutinizing my most trivial actions for fear they might be misinterpreted.

Then, too, I avoided ever finding fault with my husband, ever concealing anything from him, and always attempted to be absolutely loyal and irreproachable in word and deed. Experience was to teach me that all this was fruitless. To return to the case of my cousin, he was refused admittance to our home. He complained of this to my mother.

The latter spoke to the Consul, who made it plain to my husband that it was ridiculous for him to refuse to act as the protector of this young man, who on account of Louis' hostile attitude risked falling in with evil associates. Moreover, my husband gave the public cause for malicious gossip when he thus abandoned a boy he had previously received as a guest.

Louis replied to his brother, "How can you expect me to receive a man who enters my house every morning at seven o'clock before anyone is up?" Mother repeated this sentence to me, and its malevolence proved to me that he whom Heaven had seemed to make my natural protector was in truth my avowed enemy. I did not imagine that passion could cause one to so deform the truth.

Without allowing myself to make the slightest reproach, which I would have considered humiliating to me, I could not restrain myself from telling Louis frankly that, although it might not please him that my cousin should call in the morning, at any rate he could not without endangering my reputation forbid his attending my reception to which all Paris was asked. Louis answered harshly: "Do you want him to come to the house so that I may have the chance of running my sword through his body?"

This was the only answer my husband deigned to make. I had to accept being misjudged and slandered. My mother's uncle, the brother of the two Tascher boys, died in Paris without my being able to attend to any of his needs. Another American, a cousin of mother's, Madame Sainte-Catherine d'Audiffredi, asked to see me in order that she might recommend her children to me before she died.

I hurried to her bedside, but when on my return, still trembling from the sight of her pale distorted countenance, I described to Louis the details of this profoundly affecting scene which I had just witnessed, he replied with a sardonic smile : "You hurried to her with so much eagerness that doubtless there were other less painful objects to be seen there."

This remark was an allusion to my cousin, who also stood by the bedside of the dying woman. Such a comment coming at a moment of so sincere and deep an emotion made me judge my husband still more severely. If my cousin had attracted me, would not my husband's tactics have made me think of him still more often? But such was not the case, and fortunately people in general did not believe in my guilt, showing themselves thereby more fair than my husband was wise.

After that I never saw my cousin again. He took part in several campaigns, then returned to Martinique and settled there permanently. Louis never stopped to consider what his fantastic ways might make people think or say about me.

He cared nothing about that. The more gently I tried to accede to his wishes the more exacting and unreasonable he became. One day I stayed late in bed, not being very well. He knew this. About four o'clock in the afternoon I was in my dressing-room, which opened on the antechamber.

My husband arrived and found a servant there who a moment before had called to deliver a package but had not been able to come in. The servant said the door was locked. Immediately Louis went upstairs to his room by a private staircase and although he saw me dressing quietly with a maid, he hurried past me and began to search my room, drawing-room and even the garden. The following day the servant was dismissed pitilessly without any grounds being given for this dismissal.

Not till long afterwards did I discover that this encounter with a servant outside my door was one of my husband's most serious charges against me. Speaking to Adele, who by her marriage had become Madame de Broc, he brought out this incident as a positive piece of evidence in refuting my friend's reproaches that he made me miserable without any good reason for his attitude. "I found a servant stationed as sentinel outside her door."

"But," replied Adele, "you went into her room. Did you find anyone there?" "No, certainly not. The man had escaped by the garden, he was a better runner than I was."

"But why do you believe things you were not able to see? Your wife always shared your apartment, she never tried to impose her own will, she was always accompanied by as strict a woman as Madame de Boubers. What evidence have you against her?"

"Ah, if I had only had proofs do you believe I would have kept her as my wife? But with a woman one never can tell. Aren't there wives who, though they sleep in the same room, in the same bed as their husbands, get up while he is asleep to keep appointments with other men?"

"Stop, stop!" exclaimed Madame de Broc. "I have never read vile books, but if they have corrupted you, you do not deserve a wife like yours."

This conversation, when Adele repeated it to me long afterwards, explained many things I had never understood. Often I was tempted to think that my husband, although such a thing would have been surprising in a military man, was afraid of robbers, so great was the care with which he scrutinized every corner of our apartment before retiring, so earnestly did he insist on having every-thing locked up

by his valet, who carried off the key with him and did not return till the next morning. Since the behavior of the upper classes attracts the notice and provokes the comment favorable or otherwise of the rest of the population, it was natural enough that my domestic troubles should arouse the sympathy of some people. That those troubles should have been severely criticized by others, I can also understand. But how was it that out-and-out madmen should be attracted by what they heard of me?

A young Prussian was sent to Paris to secure for a Berlin newspaper the noteworthy productions of our literature. He lived in the rue Saint-Lazare and, doubtless, from his windows often saw me in my garden playing with my son or carrying him about in my arms. This sight aroused his frantic enthusiasm, as though a person's rank could affect the sentiments of a mother toward her child.

Instead of writing about literature he wrote constantly about me. He followed me everywhere. Any little act of charity I might happen to perform would be described with such a wealth of detail that his editor was obliged to point out to him that he was not in Paris to write exclusively about "La Princesse Louis," and that unless he resumed his regular news letters he would be dismissed.

This warning had no effect. Fearing that the young man's mind had become affected, the editor sent word to his correspondent's parents. Someone came to take him home. He had gone mad. A certain Chevalier d'Arzac, a former exile, followed me constantly for six years. On all my walks, my visits to the theater or to Malmaison, he shadowed me.

One day he stopped the Consul to present a petition asking for the hand of his stepdaughter. Another time, as I was entering my carriage, I turned and instead of my mother discovered this man, whom the servants were holding back by his coat. For a while he was supposed to be a spy. He was merely crazy. When taken to the asylum at Charenton, the doctors declared that his only eccentricities were his belief that I was his wife in the eyes of the Almighty and his writing to me all the time. He always declared that I could be his bride in Heaven. His family took him back to Lyons. I do not know what became of him.

A Monsieur de Livry had had a picture painted of a woman with her hands folded on her breast; she had unusually large finger-nails.

He had sworn never to marry anyone but the woman whose hands had served as model for those in the picture. He sent the picture to my mother to be given to me, since he considered that I resembled his ideal. However, he was not mad enough to ask for that hand although he always sought to obtain a glimpse of it whenever we happened to go to the theater.

Every time people teased me about these follies of which I was said to be the cause I replied that these men paid attention to me simply because they were insane. And this was true. Fortunately, my husband did not, oddly enough, bother about these episodes, which were known to everyone in Paris. But I should find it difficult to describe my mental anguish, which increased from day to day.

The idea that my husband did not respect me, a woman to whom respect had always been such a necessity, sometimes drove me to despair, but this feeling gave way to a determination to win back

what I felt to be my just deserts. I did not know then that passion can neither foresee the future nor remedy the past.

Moreover, although I was unhappy, never smiling and stifling the complaints which rose to my lips, yet, as I had nothing to conceal and was always calm, I was still spared the severest trial of all, the moment when one has to struggle not only against others but also against one-self. Fate still held that supreme trial in reserve for me.

Since my marriage, whenever a young man appeared who was pleasing in looks or manner, the fear that I might be attracted to him, even for an instant, put me at once on my guard.

At dances I was popular and frequently to such a degree as to make it embarrassing. People would stand on chairs in order to watch me dance. I enjoyed dancing so much in itself that I could not help being annoyed by this attention.

One evening, a Monsieur de Flahaut, a young man of my own age, who was agreeable and rather impulsive, did not restrain his enthusiasm and burst into applause. I was nettled by this action. This noisy mark of approval seemed to me to be in bad taste.

I stepped up to his mother and asked her to tell her son that I danced for my own amusement and not to win the applause of others. The next day they both called to apologize. Madame de Flahaut was a clever woman. My mother had been instrumental in having her name removed from the list of royalists debarred from reentering France, and she was much attached to us.

Her son had joined the army when he was fifteen. My husband had placed him in his regiment and protected him.

Later, Murat chose him as aide-de-camp. He was received in our family circle without ceremony, and his frivolous disposition, in spite of his mental gifts and good looks, had made me consider him merely as an agreeable guest and not at all a dangerous one.

He frequently came to see my husband and felt obliged to pay his respects to me before leaving the house. As I was generally busy in the morning, I often declined to receive him unless I happened to be taking my singing lesson. As we had the same teacher, we were able to sing duets.

One day, when he was announced and I thought he was still in the anteroom, I answered rather sharply, "Tell him I'm not at home." He was just behind the servant and overheard me. I was embarrassed and tried to excuse myself but could not help noticing his downcast expression.

One always feels more guilty when one causes a moment's unhappiness to a person who is generally gay. Suddenly Monsieur de Flahaut ceased to appear at our house. I thought this was due to my courtesy. As he did not attract me (that I was quite sure of) I did not hesitate to look him up in order to destroy the unfavorable impression he might have formed of me. I met him at Caroline's and

there I reproached him politely for not coming to see us.

He replied assuring me that he had called frequently but never found me in. I considered this simply an excuse and in order to convince myself of the fact I asked our doorman for the list of visitors who had left their names.

Sure enough Monsieur de Flahaut's name did appear frequently. I could not understand what this meant. A mystery haunts one's mind till it has been solved. I wanted an explanation and finally discovered that my husband without saying a word to me had given orders that the young man was not to be admitted.

Louis' jealousy in this instance appeared stranger to me than ever. I thought to myself, "Why should he worry about a young man who does not please me at all, whom I consider fickle, to whom I even behave rudely? But the young man will think me insincere or perhaps coquettish, for I invite him to call and yet refuse him admittance."

It is disagreeable to give people a wrong impression of yourself. That was my reason for continuing to think of this incident. At last, one night at a dance while supper was being served Monsieur de Flahaut complained to me that he had been turned away from my door while other visitors were being admitted. He might have been spared this mortification in view of the long-standing attachment which existed between our two families.

I was touched and embarrassed. I tried to console him saying, "It was not my fault, but I beg of you do not call again." Instantly I realized the mistake I had made, for with a glance that surprised me he exclaimed that he was delighted to learn that it was not I who had refused him admission, and he added with remarkable tactfulness "You will never see me again, for the idea that an action of mine should cause you inconvenience would be more than I could bear."

The impression his words produced on me may be left to the imagination. Here was a man who was aware of my husband's jealousy. I had made the mistake of revealing it to him. On the other hand, a young madcap, to whom I ought to pay no attention, showed that he sympathized with me sufficiently to promise to avoid me, to respect my peace of mind.

This was love as I understood the meaning of the word. I was overcome with surprise at being, for the first time in my life, dissatisfied with my own conduct and at finding in a young man of the world a heart whose purity of sentiment was equal to my lofty standards.

In spite of my efforts my thoughts kept returning often to Monsieur de Flahaut. My brother asked us to a dinner at his country place called La Jonchere. The party was a large one. Among the guests was a young Polish countess who was leaving France the next day. Her sadness was apparent to all observers; she loved Monsieur de Flahaut and was about to bid him farewell. She seemed overcome with grief. He too had tears in his eyes and could not conceal his feelings. I was touched by the sight. I said to myself, "He is indeed capable of loving some-one. He is suffering; he interests me. I made a

mistake when I judged him superficial.

He has shown his friendship toward me and he shall have mine he deserves it and I can give it the more readily since, being in love with another woman, he is harmless to me."

During one of the trips of the Emperor to Boulogne, Caroline came to see me about sending him good wishes for his birthday. Since my letter at the time of his marriage

I had never written to him, and together we composed two letters practically alike. The answer to Caroline was merely dictated to a secretary and signed by the Emperor. The answer to me was charming and entirely in the Emperor's own handwriting. Caroline, vexed at the difference, complained of being slighted.

She did not actually declare it was my fault, but quite naturally a little jealousy was mixed with her annoyance.

My mother went to take the waters at Aix-la-Chapelle, The Emperor was to join her there after his trip to Boulogne, and they were to visit Belgium and the Rhineland. At Aix-la-Chapelle mother made herself as popular as she did everywhere she went. On his arrival, the Emperor was received with great enthusiasm.

People were grateful to him for having brought back the relics which since the days of Charlemagne had formed the glory of the city. The canons of the cathedral and the municipal authorities felt that the way they could best show their gratitude to the man whom they looked upon as a new Charlemagne was to present him with an object which had belonged to his great predecessor.

They selected a charm which Charlemagne always wore when going into battle and which had been found still attached to his collar when his tomb was opened in the year ____ My mother requested that in addition to the charm they add a bit of the bone from Charlemagne's arm which was preserved in a shrine, a little statue of the Virgin sup-posed to have been carved by Saint Luke and a bit of the four great relics (a linen robe of the Virgin, the swaddling clothes of the infant Christ, the cloth that had enveloped Christ on the Cross and the handkerchief in which had been wrapped the head of John the Baptist).

I still have all these objects. During their stay in Belgium, the Emperor and the Empress received the visits of all the princes and princesses of the small German states who wished to attach themselves to the destinies of the French government.

They felt that the title of Emperor conferred more stability on the ruler of the French nation. They also found it more natural, more in keeping with their traditions, to pay homage to an Emperor, to be dependent on him, to look towards him for defense, to entrust their interests to a sovereign bearing that title rather than to a ruler holding office for a limited period of years, a successor to those various governments which had followed one another so rapidly and whose authority was equally precarious. The Emperor met these princes at Mayence, reviewed their troops and held maneuvers of his own

forces, which were under the command of Eugene. The public surmised, therefore, that an alliance was about to take place between my brother and one of those ruling royal families of Germany who had hastened to present their respects to the Emperor all the more eagerly as the power of the Empire increased, even in the eyes of its enemies.

At this time my husband went to Plombieres for his health and from there to Turin to preside over the deliberations of the electoral college. As I was about to have my second child, I could not accompany him and remained in Paris. My life would have been calm enough had it not been disturbed by that emotion which was already beginning to agitate my mind and heart. I did not by any means realize what was the matter.

When people spoke to me I sought to bring up the subject of the feelings of those who are in love ; I trembled at the thought that I might experience those feelings, which I dreaded, and if the person I was talking with described love as a state of passion and frenzy, I breathed more freely, saying to myself,

"What a relief, then I cannot be in love." I went daily to the Bois de Boulogne accompanied by Madame de Boubers, my son and, frequently, by Monsieur Lavallette. Monsieur de Flahaut rode there regularly.

Sometimes, we would even take walks with him. I no longer asked him to the house, but he always managed to be where I was and never missed an opportunity of declaring his sentiments toward me. When he did so my poor opinion of him revived.

I believed it was not possible to love more than once. He seemed to treat too lightly that young Polish woman whose grief had touched me, and this idea put me on my guard with him. If he spoke to me of her with respect and emotion I would weaken and would treat him kindly ; if, however, his conversation was about his affection for me, which he declared was of long standing and which his liaison with the Polish woman had not been able to destroy, I would repulse his advances.

At such times I would again consider him as one of those fickle men who only seek to please women and obtain their favors. I saw Monsieur de Flahaut almost every day. The moment I caught sight of his gray horse in the distance my heart began to beat. And yet I declined to admit I was in love. When he asked me where I should be on the morrow, I answered I had no idea.

Any other reply would have seemed to me too much like giving him an appointment. In spite of this I saw him everywhere I went. Princess Caroline had a handsome estate at Neuilly. She often invited me there.

There were boating parties and dances in the evening. One day, apparently much distressed, she said to me, "Just see what a gloomy mood that young Monsieur de Flahaut is in. I have tried to get him to dance, and he declines obstinately to do so.

I wish you would try and see if you can't persuade him." I called Monsieur de Flahaut over to me. He informed me how, that morning at lunch, in front of the servants, Caroline had teased him about his assiduous presence wherever I happened to be. He had answered sharply, but the thought that such remarks might hurt my reputation and expose me to malicious gossip was profoundly disagreeable to him.

I was touched by his concern. I told him to go and dance, and he obeyed me. Caroline, who wished to see whether I had more influence than she over a young man attached to her household—Monsieur de Flahaut was at that time one of General Murat's aides-de-camp—was convinced by his actions that a single word from me carried more weight with him than all her entreaties during an entire evening. From then on, she neglected no means for regaining an influence she should never have lost.

She appeared to sympathize with him, sought to cure him of an attachment which could only result in making him unhappy. She described me as a person who was kind and gentle but too aloof ever to be moved by any tender sentiment. She told him I was sufficiently vain to wish to have numerous admirers in attendance whom I soon tired of and, moreover, that I was tortured to such an extent by my husband's jealousy it was a sin for anyone to think of adding to my troubles.

Never had a word from me allowed Monsieur de Flahaut to think I was the least interested in him. But the eagerness that was shown to cure him of his infatuation was so great that for a time he avoided me and disappeared entirely from sight. I was at first surprised at this. But my feelings of surprise soon changed to consternation when for the first time to my knowledge I became aware of what emotions were agitating my heart.

This discovery terrified me. The intensity of my feelings, the manner in which they dominated my thoughts, seemed proof to me that they could not be wholly evil. Yet it was essential I stifle them. I summoned up all my will-power to do so.

Adele returned just at this time from a short trip to Switzerland with her sister. I threw myself into her arms, burst into tears and told her my troubles. She sympathized with me. It was agreed between us that we should seek to discover all the possible flaws and defects in the character of this man whom I ought never to have noticed.

Taking as an excuse a new song he was sending me, Monsieur de Flahaut wrote me a letter full of delicacy of feeling and expression. I did not reply but tore it up after having shown it to Adele. As the letter seemed to us excellently written, we decided, in accordance with our plan, that it was not composed by him but by his mother.

Only a woman could have expressed her-self in such a manner. Presumably I was considered to be like the heroine of some novel whom it was easy to lead astray. But all these criticisms were in vain. I was suffering. My heart was heavy. I prayed fervently. I was wounded, but I hoped to be cured. I sought to understand my feelings in order to combat them, to find a remedy as powerful as the disease.

One day I felt I was on the road to recovery. I had not been at Neuilly for a long time. I went there. Caroline was on the island. I waited in the moonlight for her to come back. She returned with her arm in that of Monsieur de Flahaut. This sight caused all my blood to rush to my heart.

She too appeared so confused at seeing me that I was astonished at her emotion. As for Monsieur de Flahaut, the more anxious he seemed to speak to me the more I avoided him. But the difficulty I felt in doing so, the intensity of my emotion was so great as to make me realize the truth. I was in love.

This knowledge completed my despair. When I left Neuilly, I was greatly upset. On returning home instead of retiring to rest I gave way to my gloomy thoughts. I regretted that my husband was not at hand, that he had not returned as I had asked him to when I first felt myself in danger.

I would have confided my problem to him, I had made up my mind to do so. Louis loved me, or at any rate he declared he did. He would understand my grief, he would help me overcome the tenderness which I felt toward Monsieur de Flahaut and aid me to escape the peril to which I was exposed. I was absorbed in these thoughts when, suddenly, a man entered my room. I uttered a cry; I felt as though I were about to faint. It was my husband.

"Oh, how you have frightened me!" was all I could say. I do not understand how it happened that the sight of a man appearing suddenly at night when I was alone in my apartment did not seriously affect my health, and hasten the birth of my child. I had no reason to expect to see him, for he was to have stayed some time longer in Turin. As a matter of fact, the day of his departure he had invited all the authorities to dine with him. In spite of this, for no known reason, he left the city, asking his aide-de-camp to act as host in his stead. He traveled day and night, left his carriage at the corner of the boulevard, dismissed his escort and entered his own home stealthily on foot.

Everyone was asleep. I was the only person awake. A maid was in the room next to mine. He would not let her warn me of his arrival. Without the slightest regard for my state of health, the fact that a sudden fright might result in a miscarriage, he exposed me to all these possible dangers for the sake of taking me by surprise. The excessive suspicion which this conduct betrayed stifled the confidence of a heart that, an instant before, had been longing for an understanding soul to which it might confide its troubles. I was unable to hide altogether the unpleasant impression such a home-coming made on me. Yet I had longed for my husband's return. I had counted on it to protect me from the dangers that threatened me.

Louis was surprised to find that I had not yet gone to bed. I told him of my visit to Neuilly, of the sadness which had come over me, of my desire to go to the country, and begged him to take me there immediately.

How easy it would have been for him to have discovered my secret! Before his departure Louis had bought the two chateaux of Saint-Leu that had belonged to the Duc d'Orleans, who had disposed of it at the time of the Revolution.

The other and older one had belonged to a former juge des fêtes forains de Joinville. The manor-house on this second estate had been torn down, and the parks of the two domains thrown into one. The deep streams that flowed through these estates made them one of the loveliest spots in France. It was there we went to spend the last weeks before the date on which my child was to be born.

The beauties of nature have always produced an extraordinary effect on me. I did not recover my lost happiness at Saint-Leu, but at least the surroundings quieted my nerves.

Pleased with myself for having had the strength of mind to leave Paris, I enjoyed to the utmost this smiling countryside and the enchanting scenery. All nature reminded me that I still loved, but it likewise convinced me that it was possible to conquer this fatal inclination, for I had been able to escape from its toils at a moment when I felt them closing in on me.

When I was on the point of leaving for Saint-Leu, I received a letter from Monsieur de Flahaut. In order to write me he signed his mother's name.

He, appeared deeply grieved at my departure. He awaited a line from me and in return was prepared to offer to place his life at my feet. I made no reply and stepped into my carriage. Caroline came to see me.

Her sole topic of conversation was the joy of loving and being loved. Her affection for her husband, which once had been so violent, seemed to have diminished. She now was attracted by the charms of a pure liaison. Thus, it was easy to guess what was going on in her mind. Can a hurt vanity transform itself into love? Is such a metamorphosis possible? The moment I recognized in her a fellow victim, I sympathized with her.

"Perhaps," I said to myself, "she does not feel herself guilty to be in love. In that case she can be happier than I. I must not regret having overcome a passion which would make both me and another wretched."

My mother came back with the Emperor from Belgium. We returned to Paris and occupied a new mansion in the rue Cerutti for, since my husband's appointment as constable of France, we could no longer live in our little house in the rue de la Victoire.

During our stay at Saint-Leu Louis had rearranged my apartment. The height of the walls between our house and those of the neighbor's had been increased; a sentry-box had been placed in the garden close to my window. My maid could no longer enter my apartment except through the drawing-room. This latter innovation aroused so much mirth among our servants that my husband was obliged to have the door replaced that connected my room with the servants' quarters.

I made no comment whatever on these changes. His wishes were my wishes. Indeed, I felt that now the more he shut me in behind locks and bars, the greater service he was doing me. Of course, it never occurred to me to forget my duties as a wife to the extent of receiving a man in my private

apartment, but the more obstacles I saw about me the better I was pleased.

My attendants, who were appointed by the Emperor, consisted of Madame de Viry, the lady in waiting, Madame de Villeneuve, Madame de Lery, Madame de Seyssel, Madame Mollien. I kept a post for Adele Auguié. Madame de Boubers was governess for my children, Madame de Boucheporn and Madame de Mornay were undergovernesses.

I had Monsieur Turgot as equerry and Abbe Bertrand as chaplain; the latter had formerly been our teacher at Saint-Germain. Monsieur d'Osmond, Bishop of Nancy, was our almoner and the principal officers attached to my husband were General Nogues, Monsieur de Caulaincourt, Monsieur de Broc, Monsieur d'Arjuzon, Monsieur de Villeneuve. He appointed a certain Monsieur de Senegra his steward.

The latter was supposed to enjoy his confidence, probably because he humored my husband's whims. De Senegra's duties included keeping a strict watch over everything that took place in the house, and in no country in Europe was the detective service as well organized as in my home.

This man was afraid of me. It must have been because he was frequently told to spy on my behavior. The result was he did not dare look at me although I treated him exactly as I did everybody else. The other aides-de-camp had nothing remarkable about them except their physical unattractiveness.

My stay at Saint-Leu gave me the opportunity of becoming acquainted with all these gentlemen, none of whom ever set foot in my apartments. I was served entirely by my ladies in waiting.

My equerry appeared only on ceremonial occasions. On October 11, 1804, a few days after my arrival in Paris, I gave birth to a second son.

In accordance with the established custom, the High Chancellor Cambaceres and all the other officials remained in the drawing-room next to my bedchamber.

My mother had hastened up from Saint Cloud at the first symptoms and did not leave me for an instant. My husband, I must confess, also took care of me with the greatest solicitude. Under such circumstances as these his character seemed to undergo a change, but once the danger was over, he once again became morose and suspicious.

Public rejoicings and profuse gifts to hospitals marked the birth of a second heir to the throne, for, both the Emperor and his brother Joseph being childless, my sons were destined to succeed them.

When my child was to be christened his father wrote in the baptismal register "Louis," which was the name he wished his son to bear. The Emperor with his own hand struck this out, insisting that all the children in his family must be called "Napoleon" and that this name should come first."

My husband, who had been obliged to submit, kept telling me over and over again while I was ill with milk-fever about this usurpation of authority and the unreasonable demands of his brother who

wished everything to be subordinated to his will.

Previously, when my first child was christened, my husband had wished to name him Charles instead of Napoleon.

These minor vexations made him colder in his attitude toward me. As I did not share his annoyance over what seemed to me to be matters of little importance he was inclined to hold me responsible for them, and this feeling made him the bitterer towards me.

If peace of mind is at all times a precious possession it becomes doubly so in the case of a poor woman lying groaning on a bed of pain, hardly recovered from the agonies which nature has inflicted on her.

On such occasions a woman longs for quiet, rest and the sympathetic care of all those who are about her. It seems as if Providence has designed these grievous trials for her in order that she may the better appreciate the joys of tender and loving care. Her weakness is so great, her sensitiveness so acute that she is unable to call upon her reason to dispel unpleasant impressions.

She becomes a child again, weeping at the slightest reproach, welcoming the most fugitive sign of kindness, but unable to bear any kind of moral shock. If at such times a misfortune falls upon her, it crushes her to earth and leaves marks which time cannot efface.

This was my condition at the moment of which I am now writing. My physical health, which had up to then withstood the moral strain, began to give way. My nurse, an old woman who nevertheless was extremely attentive to my needs, had frequently while she was sitting at night by my bedside heard someone come and listen outside my door. She had attempted to discover who it was but had not succeeded.

In telling of this incident, she thought she was merely accusing my servants of indiscreet curiosity. What she really did was to inform me that Louis dared still to be suspicious of me. For who else would have come by night to my door? This uneasiness he could not overcome finally caused him to have a bed put in my room.

All my attendants were deeply touched. My poor nurse also said with tears in her eyes "What a devoted husband he is! He wants to be his wife's nurse himself. Ah, how excellent a husband the Princess has!" I made no reply, but what were my feelings when I discovered that this action was due to a distrust that was as acute as it was indiscreet.

At nine o'clock I was supposed to go to sleep. Louis did not return from the theater till eleven. In the morning his valet woke him up at seven. My own sleep was disturbed each time and each time I said to myself, "It is suspicion, not sympathy, that inflicts this on me and watches at my bedside."

Evenings when he did not go out, my husband played chess with Monsieur Lavallette or Monsieur Mollien. I, who was just beginning to be able to get up, sat beside them, reading or drawing in

spite of the weakness of my eyesight. One day, in the presence of the two other men, my husband looked at me and said, "Women all have the same motto—'Short and sweet.'

Overcome with indignation I rose and hurried to my room. Louis noticed my attitude and followed me. "Ah," I exclaimed, "I do not know whether my life will be short, but certainly no one could say that it has been sweet."

This was the first complaint that I had ever dared utter. My husband began to laugh. He assured me that such a compliment was not intended for me and that I was mistaken in applying it to myself.

On the other hand, all his actions betrayed the fact that this was his real opinion. My fine natural constitution plus my youth saved me from those ills that almost invariably accompany a confinement which takes place under such conditions, but nervous troubles appeared about this time.

I was no longer willing to nurse my child as I was sure that after these various emotions my milk would be unsatisfactory. It became necessary to relieve me of my milk, and this affected my head and my nerves.

Sometimes I would come out of a long contemplation, alarmed at the fact that my mind had been completely empty. These fits of absence proved all too clearly how weak I still was. At such times I would send for my little ones; I would look at them and convince myself that they still had need of their mother's care. I prayed that my courage might return and believed my prayer was answered. One day the wife of Marshal Lannes brought me her children. They were full of health and energy. I asked the doctor why mine were so pale. He replied: "These children are on a regular diet. Your son dines with his father, eats anything he wants to and consequently his health suffers."

My husband came in. I repeated gently to him what the doctor had said, but he replied in a rage, "You never want me to have a chance to see my boy." And he left the room, slamming the door so violently that my bed shook.

The nurse brought me my dinner. I tried to hide my emotion. I took a spoonful of soup, but could not swallow it and swooned away. I only mention this incident because it had serious effects on my general health.

For months I was unable to eat anything. The moment I sat down at meals the very sight of food made me faint. My only nourishment for a long while was a little dry bread with a little claret. The doctor could not understand my pulse at all. Doctor Corvisart said to me one day:

"You are seriously ill and I do not know in the least what is the matter. If you have any secret sorrow, confide it to me. Doctors are like father confessors; they must be told everything."

Otherwise, they are liable to prescribe remedies that will prove mortal poisons." I answered that nothing was the matter and as I spoke, I burst into tears. The doctor made no further inquiries and afterwards never made out another prescription although he disapproved my conduct for the ten years

that followed.

My husband's severity toward me continued to increase. He had forbidden me to go anywhere, even to see my mother, without him. Six months had passed since my confinement and I was still unable to eat without fainting. Once my accoucheur came in before I had recovered my senses. He believed my nerves were responsible for my fainting fits and gave orders that I was to be taken out in the fresh air immediately.

Madame de Boubers accompanied me to the Bois de Boulogne where I met the Princess Caroline with her children and their governess.

I entered my carriage. On his return home, my husband had not found me in the house. He did not know what had taken place, took a carriage and followed my footsteps. Unable to find me in the Bois de Boulogne he became still more upset. Finally, he met me with the escort I have just described, but he never forgave me for having gone out without notifying him.

This is another of his most serious charges against me. Perhaps my gentleness increased his irritation. That idea has frequently occurred to me since, but at the time I believed that it was this very gentleness which would cure him. Moreover, as I felt myself guilty of an affection that I was unable to stifle, I was the, more ready to submit to his lack of equity.

The question of a divorce between my mother and the Emperor came up again about this time. A family council was called. The Emperor's brothers displayed such relentless animosity on this occasion that Napoleon believed they were treating a matter of public interest as if it were a private feud.

As a result, instead of heeding their advice, he made plans not only to make my mother Empress, but to have her crowned at his own coronation. The Pope came to France to perform this ceremony and it became the outstanding event of the day. People talked about nothing else.

My husband went to Fontainebleau in order to be present at the interview between the Emperor and the Pope."

While in Paris, his Holiness was lodged in the Pavilion de Fiore [a corner of the Louvre near the Pont Royal]. I called on him, accompanied by my husband and my son. The sight of this venerable figure, head of the religion which teaches the beauties of suffering and forgiveness, moved me deeply. I believe had my husband not been with me I should have fallen on my knees, imploring his Holiness to give me courage, just as though such a thing were in his power.

The Pope was everywhere sought after and treated with the greatest respect. He could see that the French Revolution had not been able to destroy here a religion which the now established liberty of conscience rendered still more inviolable.

Every day in the galleries of the Louvre an immense throng of people assembled to receive his blessing. Only one young man arrogantly refused to kneel as his Holiness passed. The Pope stopped and

said to him very gently, "An old man's blessing never does any harm."

Touched by his remark, the young man knelt in humble reverence. Thus, the gentlest religion can conquer human hearts.

On December 2, 1804, we went in state to the Tuileries and from there in a great procession to Notre Dame. The huge crowd of people who had gathered to watch us pass, the customary cheering, the presence of the head of the Church, who had traveled so far to attend the ceremony, the Italian cardinals, the army which had won so many victories, the presidents representing their different provinces, the foreign princes, the brilliant court officials, all contributed to make the spectacle one of the most imposing that can be imagined.

My mother's grace and dignity won the admiration of all those present. There had been violent discussions as to who was to carry the Empress's train. The Emperor's sisters had refused to do so, but were forced to obey or else not appear at all at the ceremony.

The Princess Joseph and I were the only ones to play our parts willingly. As she entered the church, my mother mislaid the ring given her by the Pope which he was to bless.

His superstitious nature might have seen in this incident a sign of coming misfortune. My brother found the ring afterwards and gave it to me. It is still in my possession. A few days afterwards, the Emperor distributed his symbolic eagles to the troops on the Champ de Mars.

At a cabinet meeting the question had been discussed whether it would not be advisable to change the national colors, do away with the tricolor which had aroused so much discord throughout France and which had been identified with so many crimes. But innumerable victories had since then made it a national rather than a party emblem, and the Emperor was the first to admit that it had been the symbol of France's regeneration and consequently should accompany his eagles in order that they might be feared abroad and honored at home. The different ceremonies followed one another so rapidly that we did not have a moment to ourselves. In the morning a number of Frenchmen and foreigners were brought to us to be introduced.

My husband as Constable of France had daily as his guests a number of generals and colonels. We also invited all the presidents of the French cantons. By a strange chance, a balloon that had gone astray during one of the fêtes fell near Rome and brought to that city the news of the coronation twenty-four hours after it had taken place. My eldest child had been baptized by Cardinal Caprara. The Emperor wished to have the one who had just been born baptized by the Pope.

The ceremony took place at Saint Cloud. It was the first time the Pope had ever performed this rite. Consequently, the greatest pomp accompanied it. My son cried a great deal. That was the only thing I noticed.

Such a mark of the Emperor's favor vexed Caroline keenly. She had just given birth to a daughter and had hoped to have the child baptized at the same time as mine. I should have been glad to have this

done on her account.

The Emperor would not hear of it, and naturally she was rather jealous of me. These festivities, which the Emperor was obliged to attend, had taken his mind a little off his work.

At least he seemed more willing to appear in society and to enjoy it. He had become courtly in his manners, and spoke more frequently to the ladies, but only in order that he might the more easily converse with one of them who appeared to interest him extremely.

Madame Duchatel was about the average height with a good figure. Her features were animated and intelligent, her eyes large and deep blue with a charming expression. She had a rather long and very pointed nose, a large mouth revealing the most beautiful teeth in the world, a complexion that was dull in the daytime but dazzling in the evening.

Such was the woman who disturbed my mother's peace of mind. Madame Duchatel had just been appointed lady in waiting at the palace. When she was at a ball Prince Murat never left her side, but his wife did not seem disturbed. My brother told me one day that the Emperor was in love with this lady.

Duroc had mentioned to him that my stepfather was not attending to affairs of state as assiduously as he had done previously, but talked about her all the time. He added that Murat's constant attendance on her was not in his own behalf.

We all of us feared the Empress might notice what was going on. Had she done so; it would have wounded her cruelly. We all swore to help one another keep her in ignorance of it. The wife of Marshal Ney, who had always been a close friend of mine, was on duty as lady in waiting at the palace with Madame Duchatel.

She had noticed to whom the Emperor addressed most of his remarks, and to whom, he was most attentive. My mother began to show an irritation which my friend feared would vent itself on her. I begged her, if the Empress accused her unjustly, not to undeceive her, because it would be easy subsequently to prove her own innocence, whereas if my mother's suspicions were directed in the right quarter, she could no longer be in doubt and therefore would be unhappy.

On account of her affection for me, my friend agreed to this, but always remained prepared to justify herself and declare the truth. My mother was conscious that someone was depriving her of her husband's tenderness.

She became the prey of the gloomiest thoughts and became so profoundly sad that I no longer knew what to do to console her. I confided to Louis the reasons of her grief and asked him, at the same time, on that account to allow me to visit my mother more frequently.

He acceded to my request but only after making many objections. I frequently was a witness of painful scenes between my mother and the Emperor. His wife's reproaches wearied Napoleon. He lost

his temper. She did not attempt to hide her sorrow from her attendants, who consoled her and hastened to spread abroad the reason for her tears.

The Emperor appeared as a dangerous, immoral man. When these reports came back to him, he again became angry. In the meantime, my mother's grief, which was affecting her health, brought me to the point of speaking to Prince Murat.

"You care for the Emperor," I said to him, "therefore you ought to be careful of his family life. instead of that, you are perhaps to blame for the fact that he and his wife are no longer on good terms.

By repeating the remarks, you hear made by people about the palace you irritate him. His nervousness leads to renewed quarrels. This union, which till now has been so tender and close, is being broken up."

Murat defended his conduct awkwardly. His only reply was that his devotion to the Emperor was boundless. The next day while they were out hunting, he repeated our conversation to my stepfather, probably changing it to create the impression he wished.

A reception was held at the palace that same evening. The Emperor came in looked at me sternly, pretended to speak to the two ladies who were beside me, and passed me by without a word or even a nod.

At the end of the evening he could no longer contain himself. Whenever he was angry with someone, he was unable to conceal it. He called me to him, and the following conversation took place, the people who were near us retiring to a distance to wait for it to be over:

"So, you too, madame, are against me?"

"I, your Majesty? I could never be against you."

"Oh, it is easy enough to understand. It is your mother's doing."

"I cannot help thinking of and wishing for your mutual happiness."

"But you complain of the way I treat her."

"Your Majesty, my remarks have not been repeated correctly. You are free to act as you choose, but these scenes I witness between you and my mother make you both wretched."

Those who provoke them do so in order to make themselves seem important. They are not sincerely fond of either of you."

"Why should I not have friends that tell me the truth?"

"Real friends do not try to increase friction between a married couple."

"But your mother's jealousy makes me look ridiculous to onlookers. All sorts of stupid remarks are made about me. Don't you think I know about them? She is to blame."

"No, your Majesty, those whom I am complaining about are to be blamed for it. If they tried to calm you instead of arousing your anger, you would be more considerate of my mother's feelings. How can you expect her to have more self-control than you have yourself? She suffers and she complains. That is natural enough. If those whom you consider your friends did not repeat her complaints to you, or if you were able to control yourself enough not to show her your displeasure, I am sure you would again be happy together. But, I repeat, do not expect more patience from her than you have yourself."

"You are right," said the Emperor, suddenly becoming more gentle. "I realize that though I may be great in great things, I am petty in small ones."

With these words he left me. Several days later he spoke about me in the presence of several persons, one of his remarks was so flattering I feel I must record it.

This was the sentence as it was repeated to me "Hortense reasons so clearly that one would think she is not influenced by her emotions. But when you know her well, you realize that her emotions are what make her reason so well."

On another occasion, speaking to me of my married life, he said laughingly, "Louis would have been happier with the Empress. One would have guarded the window while the other guarded the door."

Becoming serious, he added, "I know how irreproachable your conduct is, and I assure you you are not only one of the women but one of the persons I admire the most."

Such a remark coming from a man who was chary of his praise frequently consoled me for the injustice of others. Since then I have remembered it with pride, and that memory has helped me bear the censure of which I received so large a measure. Although not so uncomfortable as mine, the Empress's married life was far from being a happy one.

My mother began to discover who was occupying her husband's mind. In a short time no doubt remained possible. One evening at Malmaison she had complained of the Emperor's mood to the two ladies in attendance, who were Madame Ney and Madame Duchatel.

The following morning, she said, looking at them severely, "Ladies, it is most surprising that the Emperor repeated to me this morning a remark I made only to you last night."

Madame Duchatel's color changed, and no doubt was left in my mother's mind. Her grief was so violent that she succeeded in persuading the Emperor to break off his liaison. The effort was nevertheless a painful one, for Duroc told my brother and me how strong an influence this love-affair

had on the Emperor.

He was used to seeing everything bow before his will. Consequently, resistance increased his desire, but he had too much self-control to allow himself to be dominated by his feelings.

Then, also, he was too severe in his judgment of the private life of others to admit publicly that he was entangled in a liaison; and he did not hesitate to put a stop to an affair which was already causing him inconvenience.

In order to be able to see Madame Duchatel and not arouse the suspicions of her husband, the Emperor for several evenings went out on foot alone with Duroc. Once he was taking a walk with her at Villiers, the estate belonging to the Murats, when they heard a noise.

Afraid of being discovered, the Emperor leaped over a high wall at the risk of hurting himself. Duroc, not so excited, did not dare to imitate him. Constantly terrified to see him exposing himself in this way, Duroc was delighted when the liaison came to an end.

I heard through Caroline that the Emperor sent Madame Duchatel his portrait set in magnificent diamonds. She kept the portrait but returned the diamonds as she considered such a gift an insult. Caroline also told me that she had once been asked by the Emperor, when Madame Duchatel was ill, to obtain the letters he had written her. They were supposed to be extremely tender.

Madame Duchatel was never willing to return them. I do not know whether they are still in her possession.

People talked a great deal about the masked ball at the Opera. "What," said the Emperor, "your husband has never taken you in a box to watch one of these spectacles? He really is too severe. You must go some night with your mother."

One evening after a large reception, the Empress, whom I was in the habit of taking back to her apartment, invited me to accompany her to one of these balls. I should have liked to have had my husband's permission. Although he hardly had spoken to me for a long time I felt that for the first time he might now have reason to complain of my conduct. I was unable to reach him as he had already left the palace. The Duc de Vicente and Monsieur de Bausset had been appointed to accompany us. I kept beside Madame de Boubers.

The sight of the masks amused me, but as no one accosted me, I was unable to understand why people found these balls so amusing.

After we had twice walked around the ball-room a man in a mask stopped us and wished us to go with him.

"What", he exclaimed, "you indulge in an amusement which you so rarely have an opportunity to enjoy and you do not know how to make the most of the occasion? You are nothing but a little fool."

The man with the mask frightened me. We returned to the Tuileries. My mother was much worried to find that the Emperor was not there.

A moment later he appeared wearing a domino and informed us that it was he in disguise who had amused himself by frightening us, but that our hasty return had spoiled his plans.

When I reached home I at once told my husband everything that had occurred, but Louis made no comment of any kind. He no longer showed his disapproval of my conduct by reproaches as he had done when we were newly married.

Now he indicated it by a chilling silence. A few months before the Emperor's departure for Italy a page came one morning to say that he wished to see us. When we arrived, he announced that he insisted we obey him. His plans made it imperative that he adopt our eldest son, whom he would crown King of Italy."

My husband replied that he would never consent to his son's holding a rank higher than his own. The Emperor at first stormed, then became quieter. He wished to make my husband understand that the child would remain in France until he came of age; that he would have two establishments, one French, the other Italian; that, moreover, it was the only means of avoiding war with Austria and keeping Italy. But my husband remained firm. Then the Emperor, giving way to his temper, complained how bitter it was to have a family that helped him better conditions. A year later she was discovered living alone in a little villa at Neuilly. On one occasion when the Emperor went to lunch with Prince Murat, she was present to announce the arrival of the guests. From that moment she vanished, and everyone explained her disappearance as he pleased. People said the Emperor occasionally went to see her, riding over from Saint Cloud.

During the war with Prussia, she gave birth to a son," whom Princess Caroline took care of.

The Emperor only saw her once after his return. On this occasion, being naturally suspicious of women, he made her confess that during her stay at Neuilly she had frequently received visits from Prince Murat and had not been indifferent to him.

From then on, he remained always in doubt as to whether he was really the father of the child although everyone assured him such was the case.

To return to my narrative. The Emperor was so indignant at his brothers' refusal to fall in with his plans—for Joseph also declined anything that would take him away from Paris—that he had the well-known letter about Eugene published in the *Moniteur* [the official newspaper] which states with equal emphasis how greatly the Emperor is attached to my brother and how angry he is with his own family.

Eugene was made High Chancellor of Italy, one of the highest dignitaries of the State. When my brother received the news of his appointment he was at the head of his regiment, leading his men into Italy. The Emperor and Empress arrived there not long afterwards. They were crowned King and Queen of Italy."

The Emperor had asked us to accompany him, but my husband refused, and we went instead to Saint-Leu. I had had occasion to meet Monsieur de Flahaut again at all the festivities that were held in connection with the coronation of the Emperor in Paris. Each time I felt ill at ease. I took the greatest care to avoid him and I so dreaded hearing the sound of his voice that one day while we were driving and he came up to the carriage with the intention of speaking to me I ordered the coach-man to drive on.

He was much upset at this attitude toward him, and his mother called on me to complain about it. I replied that I had no fault to find with her son and that my behavior had been entirely unconscious.

When I examined my own conscience, I decided that to have "no fault to find" with Monsieur de Flahaut was in itself a fault. I had thought all my efforts had cured me. To my sorrow I discovered by the pain I felt on catching sight of him once more that such was not the case.

I vowed I would behave as naturally toward him as toward anyone else. At the first ball at which we met I spoke to him, and my voice trembled. Nevertheless, I was pleased to have had even that much self-control. At the second ball I invited him to dance with me. While we waltzed, he told me how much my coquetry had wounded him.

I was indignant to hear myself accused of the fault I most despised. "What! Do you think me coquettish?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, I do. For at first, you were kind to me. I asked nothing more. Your kindness sufficed to make me happy and suddenly it seems to have turned to hatred."

I felt I had given him grounds for judging me thus. What strange things our hearts are! I did not wish to be loved. I fled from anything that faintly resembled love, and yet after all my struggles the mere accusation of being coquettish hurt me so deeply that, forgetting the ball, my rank, the fact that the eyes of all present were fixed upon me, I could not restrain my tears. I trembled even while I gave way to my feelings. What was I to say to those who might have noticed them?

As for Monsieur de Flahaut he was even more deeply moved than I was myself. In a single instant my tears had revealed my feelings to-ward him more clearly than I should ever have dared in words.

"Once you cared for me a little. Why did you not let me know? You would have saved me much suffering! And now, although I still love you and you alone, I am no longer free."

"No, no, I do not love you," I exclaimed. "Although I might possibly have feared to do so at one time, all that is past, I assure you."

"Then, at least, let us be friends," said he.

"Your friendship will console me for all I have lost." I gave him my promise. We separated. This talk had calmed me a little.

I had nothing to fear from a man who informed me that he had another liaison elsewhere. This proof of his confidence in my discretion was sufficient to convince me of Monsieur de Flahaut's respect and admiration. I could ask no more. Yet how fierce are the storms which sentiments we seek to subdue can arouse in our bosoms.

No one was aware of the cause of my troubled looks and emotion. The Emperor, struck like everyone else by the change in my manner, said to my mother, who repeated his remark to me "Hortense no longer has her fine complexion. Her husband is making her unhappy. One of these days we must be prepared for a violent outburst of some kind. If she ever falls in love, she will feel it very deeply, and love makes one commit all sorts of follies."

"Ah," replied my mother, "but Hortense is so sensible."

"True enough, but her emotions are acute."

"She is so gentle, so subdued; she never acts in a hasty, impetuous manner."

"Don't be too sure she could not do so upon occasion. Look at the way she walks. Listen to what she says. Everything about her reveals a highly keyed nature. If she were otherwise, she would not be your daughter."

When my mother told me this, I cast my eyes down. My only reply was a smile, my only hope was that I might prove the Emperor had been mistaken. Before we left for Saint-Leu my husband had obliged me to dismiss my head maid simply because he did not like her and fancied that she always looked as if she were making fun of him.

He gave me another maid, who is still with me, and my mother took my former one, who was very sorry to leave. Sometime previously I had taken as my reader Mademoiselle Cochelet, one of my fellow pupils at Saint-Germain.

My interest in her had been aroused by the smallness of her fortune and the tender care with which had nursed her mother through an extremely long illness. I always liked to have with me someone whom I could eventually marry off with a dot. As I did this out of my own pocket-money my husband made no objections.

My ladies in waiting, the under-governesses of my children were all young and everyone in my household was lively and gay. Some of my attendants to be sure had noticed my husband's sternness toward me; but what need one fear when one has nothing to conceal?

All were pleased to go to Saint-Leu. The number of persons familiar with my life at home had been small up to this time. What went on there was a secret, and my husband and I were considered to be quite a model couple. The only fault people found with us was that I was rather unkind in my attitude toward such a devoted husband.

This coldness was supposed to be the result of my poor health. After the birth of my son, Louis presented me with a set of diamonds. I was hurt rather than pleased.

A little more consideration would have pleased me better than this visible token of a harmony that did not exist. My ladies all were outspoken in their disapproval of my lack of appreciation for my husband's gift. I was the only one to suffer, because I did so in silence.

Nevertheless, at Saint-Leu my ladies became aware of how things actually stood. In the first place the service was as strict as though we had been living in a fortress. If any of my attendants took a stroll alone in the garden my husband would tease them and make unpleasant remarks about it. One day two of the ladies and I went beyond the confines of the grounds.

One of the gates was almost off, only held in place by four nails. My friends wanted to open it to see what the edge of the park looked like. This was certainly an innocent enough desire, and I did not forbid them doing as they wished. After having taken a few steps in the park we at once returned to the house. Already a search-party was being organized, and the next day the gate was walled up.

On another occasion a young man who called to leave a written petition of some kind asked to see one of the ladies in waiting. He was refused admission, his movements were watched and he was followed by spies. One of my husband's aides-de-camp by the name of Donnat, who was in charge of the château, made a tour of inspection every night through the entire park. Every morning he would be reprimanded. "You are not doing your duty properly," my husband would exclaim. "A man entered the park last night. I know it. I heard him."

Poor Donnat swore that such a thing was impossible. He was unable to convince his master. My husband without another word or for any reason that I could discover moved into a room of his own and assumed his severest air whenever he addressed me. One day, apparently in great excitement, he sent for this aide-de-camp and said: "Donnat, get on your horse at once, ride as fast as you can, and you will overtake a young man who is just leaving the village. Ask him for the letter that was delivered to him here. Tell him you come from the person who sent it and who wants to add a postscript. Hurry off and come back immediately. Don't forget to take off your cross of the Legion so that you will not be recognized."

The aide-de-camp met no one on the road and went as far as the gates of Paris. He returned to report how unsuccessful his mission had been. My husband exclaimed, "Ah! those people always use by-

paths." I only heard these details when we were in Holland where the aide-de-camp, having discovered my husband's true character, admitted to one of my ladies in waiting that he had for a long while believed I was carrying on illicit love-affairs, an idea which only was dispelled when he became thoroughly familiar with our domestic situation.

If any of my young ladies in waiting went to Paris, a retired soldier, Louis' chief spy, followed them everywhere and reported in writing everything they did. Sometimes their rooms would be ransacked, and their desks opened by force. They noticed this and sympathized with me in silence.

Even Madame Campan was not spared. She had been invited to spend a few days at Saint-Leu and to bring my cousins Stephanie de Beauharnais and Stephanie Tascher, the sister of Monsieur Tascher, and Mademoiselle Monroe, daughter of the President of the United States.

While she was away her chambermaid was offered fifty thousand francs in exchange for, the letter and portrait of mine that Madame Campan had, kept. The maid could not give anything. The police later learned these details. What woman would not be compromised and have her reputation stained by such outrageous proceedings? But the person whose character is such that it allows him to cherish suspicions of this kind, can only reap sorrow and torment.

Never able to find the proof he seeks, he becomes more and more unstrung, he persists and falls a victim to a monomania, an idee fixe, that of finding out something which never occurred. Because he has done wrong, he seeks to discover a crime and in a victim sees only a criminal. If he could really find a culprit his conscience would be satisfied, he would escape the accusation of having been unjust.

He congratulates himself on the fact that he has only been cruel. As for me, deprived of amusement and health, my strength failed rapidly, and my greatest sorrow sprang from the fact that no one was aware of my position. My mother, my brother were far away. Only Adele realized the extent of my misfortune and sympathized with me.

I spent all my time taking care of my children and painting. I was just then copying the portrait that Gerard had made of me, but I was unable to keep on with this as the smell of the paints reacted too violently on my nerves.

My husband was irritated at seeing me always at work and apparently calm and resigned. "You seem to be killing time," he said to me, "waiting for the coming of happier days." This phrase was apparently intended as an allusion to his own poor health. What could I answer? I grew weaker, I made no effort to regain my strength and in a short time should have pined away had not a violent shock saved me. I received a letter from Eugene.

It announced his appointment as Viceroy of Italy and expressed his grief at being separated from his family and his native land. This letter gave me a terrible blow.

All my misfortunes had made my brother's love more necessary than ever to me. He alone really knew me, really admired me. With him gone, I should be utterly exposed to my husband's hostility

without a person who understood me or who would protect me. It was true that Eugene had no idea of what I was enduring. I had considered it one of my duties to hide my sufferings even from his eyes, but if he were near me, I felt that I could at any moment draw upon the wealth of his sympathy if I felt the need.

News of his death would not have hurt me more than did this message that we were separated indefinitely. My tears, which for a long time had refused me their comfort, welled up and flowed abundantly. They saved my life for, from that day on, I began again to take a little nourishment.

Far from sharing my grief Louis had burst out laughing at the sight of my tears, and his heartlessness on this occasion was the one of his actions that wounded me deeper than any of the others.

On the other hand, I received from Monsieur de Flahaut a letter full of sympathy and understanding. He realized how deeply I was affected by this separation from a brother I adored. He shared my grief the more as this separation meant for him the absence of a friend to whom he was deeply attached.

How easy it is to touch a heart bowed down with sorrow. I felt that I was finding in the person who understood me so well the brother I had lost. Filled with this consoling thought I saw no reason for not answering this letter. This was the first time I had written him.

The knowledge of his entire confidence in and friendship toward me won a favor which love would never have obtained. My husband was ordered to take the baths at Saint Amand. We went there, leaving our youngest son with Madame de Boubers and taking only the eldest boy with us accompanied by his undergoverness, Adele and Mademoiselle Cochelet.

We stopped at Mortefontaine to visit Prince Joseph. I had a letter written to Madame Campan to give her news of my health. My valet-de-chambre took the letter and handed it over to my husband, who was seen by my ladies in waiting reading it in the park. On our arrival at Saint Amand I saw this same man, who had married one of my maids, ransacking my private papers. Upon being discovered he threw himself at my feet, told me I had his life in my hands, but that he was acting under the orders of his master, who, he confessed, had promised him a hundred Louis if he could find proof of my guilt or anything against me.

I remained as astonished and ashamed at my husband as I did at myself for being the victim of such an all-devouring passion. I told the servant that, as he only obeyed the orders of his master, he might continue to do so. It made no difference to me. Indeed, how could I be expected to care about my husband's respect for me, that respect which I had valued so highly in the past, when I saw all his weaknesses?

Later, worldly experience, which revealed to me how passion can disfigure even the most noble characters, rendered me more indulgent. In those days I was only willing to forgive Louis because he was my husband and I felt it was my duty to do so.

Finally, I found an excuse for him in his bad health. Nevertheless, as I was satisfied with my own conduct, I became less and less anxious about his approval. Each day he did something which obliged me to consider it as having little value. Once I found one of his secretaries opening my private correspondence.

All my letters came from either my mother or my brother. Another day I was walking beside Adele, who was showing me a letter from a young Polish woman, Christine Kosowska, that had been brought up with us at Saint-Germain. My son, my other ladies in waiting, my carriage and my servants were close at hand.

My husband came up behind us, snatched away the letter eagerly and sought in it for some ground for his jealousy. Ashamed at having been mistaken he said to us "You ladies are clever, you wish to put me off the track, but I have just seen two men on horseback ride away from here."

Although afterwards he often referred to this story, we always thought he did so in fun. Not at all. While we were in Holland, he repeated his remark to Madame de Broc in front of his entire court and his ministers of state, adding: "They thought I was taking my bath. I surprised these two ladies making believe to read a letter from a young girl at boarding-school, and I saw two men dash off at a gallop through the wood. I spoke to them about it, they pretended to be astonished.

The next day I sent to Valenciennes and learned that, as a matter of fact, two young men arrived from Paris that day and left within twenty-four hours." I ask every unprejudiced person how anyone could believe that a husband would amuse himself by inventing such stories about his wife, stories for which, he knew himself, there was not the least basis of fact. Perhaps by repeating them often he finally came to think they were really true. The Emperor had returned from Italy.

The magnificent ceremony at which he distributed the crosses of the Legion of Honor and which I had witnessed had been held before his departure. He went to Boulogne to hold a second similar ceremony on his fête day in the presence of his assembled army.

He had appointed my husband general in the Reserve Corps and sent him a special message that he and I should come to the camp of Boulogne and bring our son Napoleon. My husband did not agree to go himself. But after considerable hesitation and after keeping me in suspense till the last moment, he did not dare refuse the Emperor's request for me and my son.

He finally gave me permission to be away eight days. I was delighted with the idea of having an opportunity of seeing those wonderful camps about which everyone was talking, and if I may admit the fact, I felt like a school-child out of sight of a stern teacher, as though I could breathe more freely when I was away from my husband.

The Emperor was living at a little country-place near Boulogne known as Pont-de-Briques. Caroline and Murat occupied another estate close by. I lived with them and we dined every day with the Emperor.

For the two preceding years our troops had been concentrated opposite England, and everyone expected an attack on England. The camps which surrounded Boulogne were placed beside the sea and resembled a city with long straight streets.

Each but had a little garden, flowers and birds. Near the Tour d'Odre stood the but intended for the Emperor and beside it the one for General Berthier. All the flat-bottomed boats were lying in the different harbors waiting for the starting signal.

One caught sight of England far in the distance. Her graceful ships, cruising up and down off the coast, seemed to form an unbreakable barrier. The scene as a whole conveyed an impression of grandeur and of an operation on a greater scale than anything similar that had ever been attempted. Everything stirred one's imagination. There was this immense ocean about to become a battle-field and perhaps swallow up the finest flower of two nations' manhood; there were our troops proud of never having known defeat, restless after two years of inactivity, aflame with bravery and valor, imagining that they were already landing on the opposite shores.

Their faith and their intrepidity made success seem possible, but an instant later the sight of the many obstacles which lay in their path, the fear of all the dangers through which they must pass to attain their goal, chilled the heart and disturbed the mind. The only thing this expedition needed was a favorable wind.

Of all the attentions a woman can receive those which soldiers offer her have a knightly quality about them that is particularly flattering. Never had there been, I believe, a more brilliant and imposing gathering of distinguished soldiers than this at which I found myself.

Consequently, it was the one time they really made an impression on me. The Emperor had appointed his equerry General Defrance as my escort. Whenever I went to visit a camp it would at once be turned out for me and its troops maneuver before me. I asked for the pardon of some officers who had been punished for breaches of discipline and I was received with the greatest enthusiasm.

Staff officers on horseback accompanied my carriage, and wherever I went brilliant music greeted my arrival. For the first time in my life I saw, at one of the reviews, an urn carried on a bandoleer by a soldier in one of the grenadier regiments. I was told that the Emperor, in order to honor the memory of a particularly brave soldier named La Tour d'Auvergne, had entrusted the latter's heart in a lead casket to the keeping of the oldest member of his former regiment. Whenever the roll-call took place the hero's name was called as if he were present, and the bearer of the casket replied: "Killed on the field of honor."

One day a luncheon was given for me at the camp at Ambleteuse. I wished to go there by sea in spite of the unfavorable wind. The Admiral took me. I saw the English vessels quite close at hand. The Dutch commanded by Admiral Ver Huell received me with loud cheers, but had no more idea than I had that a year later I should be their queen.

Another time the Emperor had a little war game. The English, uneasy at seeing so many troops massed together, came in close to shore. They fired several shots, and the Emperor, always at the head of the French troops when they were in action, found himself between two fires.

As we had followed him, we were obliged to remain. My son was not the least frightened, and his uncle was delighted with him. But the generals trembled at seeing the Emperor expose himself in this manner.

The ramrod of a clumsy soldier might have proved as fatal as an enemy's cannon-ball. One thing impressed me particularly in the midst of this martial scene: the fact that these heroic troops, whose bravery terrified the foe when they went into battle, were as easy to control when in camp as a crowd of children and like children were amused at any little thing, any bird, any flower. The dashing warrior had been replaced by the mild-mannered schoolboy.

During the luncheon given me at Ambleteuse under canvas by the Marshal Davout, some grenadiers who had learned appropriate verses for the occasion came and sang them to me while we were at table. They were as shy as young girls would have been. I was the more surprised at their timid manner, their awkward air and embarrassed attitude when singing about the invasion of England, for if I remember correctly each verse ended with the phrase for crossing the Channel isn't quite as difficult as drinking up the sea.

From the Emperor's drawing-room we frequently caught sight of the soldiers on guard-duty, who would gather on the lawn that encircled the house. One of them would take a violin and give his comrades a dancing lesson. The beginners studied the steps and figures attentively while the more advanced pupils were able to complete the entire quadrille. We were much amused as we watched them from behind the blinds. The Emperor, who sometimes caught us unawares, would also laugh at the sight and seem to enjoy the innocent pastimes of his soldiers. Was a serious attack on England ever really planned to take place? Or did the Emperor by these immense preparations intend to distract the public's attention from other things and concentrate it on that one point? I cannot say.

This again is one of the questions which I shall not attempt to answer. Here as elsewhere in these memoirs I shall confine myself to telling what I saw. The wife of Marshal Ney gave a brilliant reception for me at Montreuil where her husband was in command.

The morning was spent in watching the evolutions of the troops maneuvering especially for my benefit. In the evening a ball took place, which was suddenly interrupted by the news that the Emperor had just embarked. Everyone was excited and bewailed the fact that they were at a dance when the crossing into England was taking place. A host of young officers who were present dashed off along the highway to Boulogne.

I followed them at full speed, always accompanied by General Defrance, who was consumed with impatience to rejoin the Emperor. I myself felt overcome with an inexpressible emotion at the idea that so momentous an event was taking place before my eyes. I already imagined that, standing at the Tour d'Odre, I was witnessing the naval battle and seeing our vessels plunge into the watery deep. I

trembled at the thought. Finally, we arrived at our destination. I asked for the Emperor and learned that, as a matter of fact, he had superintended the embarkation of all the troops during the night but that he had just returned to the house.

I did not see him until dinner when he questioned Prince Joseph, who at that time was colonel in command of a regiment, as to his impressions of the embarkation, the manner in which it had been carried out and the time it had taken. Joseph stated that everyone believed it was the real departure from France and that the soldiers acting on this idea had sold their watches. The Emperor also inquired frequently if the semaphore had signaled the approach of a French squadron on board which was his aide-de-camp Lauriston.

He seemed quite as though he were expecting only the arrival of this squadron and a favorable wind to give orders for the departure of the flotilla of transports. The eight days allowed me by my husband were almost over. I hesitated to remain twenty-four hours longer. The Emperor, who wished me to witness some combat between his ships and the English vessels, was anxious for me to stay on. I resisted so energetically that he said crossly "Then you are free to go, madame, since you fear offending your husband more than you do displeasing me."

With these words he left me abruptly. I did not know what to do. To return under such conditions would have been most disagreeable. Joseph, who was present, told me that it was out of the question to leave the Emperor so annoyed. It was the first sign of impatience he had ever shown toward me, and I was much concerned over it. I decided to remain a day longer. When he saw me the next morning the Emperor, satisfied with my having yielded to him, spoke to me with a truly fatherly kindness, saying "You really are too afraid of your husband. He is only unreasonable in his demands because you allow him to take an unfair advantage of you. A good woman has always the rights which her virtue confers on her."

I went through Dunkirk, and through Calais. Everywhere I saw handsome regiments pass by and I felt the more regret at leaving this brilliant army when I thought with terror that a few days later it was to be exposed to the most appalling dangers. On all my trips I had caught sight of Monsieur de Flahaut accompanying my carriage with the other officers. In the evening, also, when we were the guests of Caroline, we had sung together, but we had never been able to talk alone, although I was well aware that he was eager to speak to me.

I returned to Saint Amand delighted with my trip and full of the sights I had beheld. I described them in detail to my husband. He listened coldly to my account and was not in the least grateful to me for having preferred to return home rather than witness the naval combat.

The more enthusiastic I became in my narrative, the more annoyed he seemed to be. We were expecting daily to receive news of the crossing to England when we suddenly saw all the troops come back through the place where we were living, hurrying by forced marches to the Rhine.

Austria had broken the peace and declared war. We returned to Paris in order to see the Emperor before his departure for Germany. He took Murat with him and appointed my husband Governor of Paris in the place of Murat.

Louis was again annoyed. "He had better not expect that I shall agree to everything the way Murat did," my husband said to me. "My brother perhaps expects that I shall make myself unpopular as governor and adopt as stern measures as those employed to keep order in the days of the Duc d'Enghien."

If you are asked to do things that are distasteful to your sense of honor," I replied, "you can always refuse; but as things are at present how can you decline to help your brother?"

"My health does not allow me to make myself useful.

Otherwise I should be in the army, but I am not well enough for that." Nevertheless, Louis accepted the appointment. in spite of all his objections he was dominated by the Emperor's will.

It was Napoleon who had brought him up, perhaps somewhat too severely, and my husband had kept from his early days a sort of fear which prevented his contradicting the Emperor to his face.

As a result of his early training Louis lacked the self-confidence which would have allowed him to express freely his very decided nature. Consequently, although born with a determined will of his own, he lacked that incisive driving power needed to execute the decisions he made.

Yet when he did accept a post, he filled it well, better even than anybody else. He even sometimes came to like his new duties. His greatest handicap was the fact that whenever he took up a new thing he did so reluctantly and had a preconceived idea that people were against him.

The Emperor's genius showed itself in the smallest as well as in the greatest matters. My husband sometimes repeated to me orders he had given which showed his prodigious memory. If he asked to have reinforcements sent him he would himself indicate the number of officers and men available as well as the different points where they were stationed. If he met isolated soldiers belonging to different divisions on their way to join the regiments which were marching toward the Rhine, he knew exactly where each regiment was to be at a given day and indicated their eventual destination and how to reach it.

While I was at Boulogne my mother had been taking the waters at Plombieres. During the war she went to Strasbourg to be in close touch with the Emperor. She informed me before her departure that the police had discovered my husband's spy system, and the Emperor had reproved Louis seriously in regard to it. I have already referred to it on different occasions.

The most curious fact, however, and one which I did not know at the time, was that five or six young men in Paris were constantly being followed in order to discover which one of them was my lover.

They were selected from among those with whom I danced the most frequently, as I never received any man at home. The spies had not been able to discover a single thing. What evidence could they have found against me? But it was likely that my name was frequently mentioned in low drinking-places where such informers gather. Was it likely to be spoken respectfully when even my husband did not respect it? I tried to find something that would distract my mind.

The best way seemed to me to be to succor those who were in need. I took advantage of my husband's position to have many poor people admitted to the various hospitals. I accepted the post of president of the Asile de la Providence; I took over several beds at the old people's home at Sainte Perine ; I attended the meetings of the Maternal Society presided over by Madame de Pastoret. But although these occupations provided relief from my worries, I was unable to find any surcease from the anxiety caused by public events.

War had begun. Not a day passed without the arrival of a messenger bringing news of some brilliant victory. The idea of the dangers which threatened the person of whom I thought all too often showed me how much I cared for him and dimmed my joy. When a dispatch arrived, I trembled lest it contain his name.

One day he was mentioned for distinguished conduct, another time for having received a wound. Fortunately, I was alone when I received the news. The acuteness of my emotion was too great to allow me to imagine that it was purely the result of a friendly concern for his safety.

When I saw the woman whom I believed to be in love with him apparently calmer than myself, I was furious with her. When I saw her sad and downcast, I felt attracted to her and forgave her the moments of anguish which she so often inflicted on me.

Our victorious troops had pressed forward up to the very gates of Vienna itself when Prussia assumed a hostile attitude toward us.

My husband received orders to go to Nimeguen and take command of an army of observation. His departure touched me, for after all he was the father of my children. How could I fail to forgive him and wish him Godspeed?

He was about to be in danger. I often received letters from him. War did not break out where he was stationed, and he traveled about in Holland. He received the most flattering attention but hastened to return home in spite of instructions to remain at his post.

My mother sent me the letters she received from the Emperor. They were laconic but often spoke of what was about to happen and the successful exploits of his troops. The Emperor wrote me once from Vienna that he expected my son to prove worthy of the lofty destiny which Fate held in store for him.

After the battle of Austerlitz, the Emperor asked my husband to have the little boy sent him so that he could show him to the victorious army. The request was refused.

About this time the Emperor created the kingdoms of Bavaria and Wurtemberg and the grand duchies of Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Nassau and Berg.

On his return to Munich he decided to marry my brother to the Princess Augusta of Bavaria, daughter of the King. My mother had left Strasbourg and joined the Emperor in Munich. She wished me to meet her there. My husband would not allow me to leave, and this refusal caused me one of the greatest disappointments I have ever experienced.

Eugene was ordered to go to Munich without knowing the reason for his journey. A few days later he was adopted by the Emperor as his son and married by the Prince-Primate to a most lovely and noble-minded princess.

On this occasion the Emperor wrote me a letter containing the following flattering sentence: "The Princess of Bavaria possesses many good qualities. You will find her in every way worthy to be a sister to you."

In connection with this wedding he had to face several family quarrels. Murat and his wife were unwilling to attend. Following his last brilliant campaign Murat would not suffer a younger man to take precedence at court over him. He broke his sword on hearing the news that the Emperor had adopted my brother.

Already Eugene's appointment as Viceroy of Italy had angered him greatly. Caroline was indignant over such an advantageous match for a family she did not consider related to her.

On her return she spoke to me frankly and admitted that at Munich she had advised her brother the Emperor to obtain a divorce in order to marry the Princess Augusta himself. The latter would have been just the wife for Napoleon according to Caroline. But she was obliged to obey her brother's commands and did so with the most obvious reluctance.

The Bonaparte family soon had another occasion to feel vexed. My cousin Stephanie de Beauharnais, daughter of the Count de Beauharnais, had lost her mother when still very young. She had been educated at Saint-Germain under the supervision of my mother. Now she was fifteen years old and possessed all the charm and grace that belong to that age.

The Emperor took her out of school, adopted her as his daughter, and married her to the hereditary Grand Duke of Baden. Caroline was so annoyed by this social advancement that at the state receptions, where my cousin, owing to her new rank, found herself beside the Princess Murat, the latter turned her back on her and pointedly avoided speaking to the new Grand Duchess.

At this time the foreign monarchs were so eager to secure an alliance with the Emperor that they would have accepted a relative of his even in the thirteenth degree. So long as the Emperor was willing to adopt such a relative this adoption was more than sufficient.

The Court of Wurtemberg made certain proposals in view of marriage between the Crown Prince and my mother's cousin Mademoiselle Stephanie Tascher, but the Emperor refused, not being pleased with that young woman's conduct. While she was staying with my mother, Stephanie had lost her head over the General R marriage between them was entirely out of the question.

My mother was indignant about it, repeating constantly, "How can anyone choose a man without education or any sort of distinction except that of being a good soldier?" But these objections proved useless. The more people seek to belittle the object of our affections, the more our pride increases our attachment to him.

The Emperor, seeing how indignant the Empress was with her cousin and believing that I could reason more calmly, had asked me to speak to Stephanie and inform her that he would never consent to such a marriage. I thought the best means of changing her mind was to appeal to her heart.

After emphasizing the inflexible refusal of the Emperor and the Empress to consent to the marriage, I had shown her how obstinacy on her part would lead to the unhappiness and disgrace of the man she cared for, how she would be responsible for this state of things and consequently, would also be miserable. I had added some words of praise regarding General R Stephanie had been touched by my arguments. I had succeeded.

She gave up all ideas of this marriage, returned to Madame Campan's school, and a year later became the wife of the Duc d'Arenberg. The marriage of Stephanie de Beauharnais took place with truly royal splendor. Cardinal Caprara, Papal Nuncio, pronounced the nuptial benediction and magnificent ceremonies took place.

At one of the court balls Caroline and I danced a quadrille. My partner was the Crown Prince of Bavaria, who was spending some time in Paris. He was not attractive in appearance, was almost deaf and stuttered. Besides he was deeply marked with smallpox, yet he was clever. The fact that he was Eugene's brother-in-law was more than sufficient recommendation for me.

Consequently, I took the best possible care of the Prince. I loaned him my diamonds. I arranged them myself on his hat. I did my best to make him appear to advantage. My quadrille was more admired than that of Caroline, who was again rather jealous over this trifling success. The Princess Pauline, another sister of the Emperor, had accompanied her husband to Santo Domingo, where he had died.

She married again, her second husband being Prince Borghese, who was not particularly clever but good-looking and who possessed a great fortune in Rome. Pauline's poor health obliged her to take constant care of herself. She had the reputation, which she well deserved and of which she was very proud, of being the handsomest woman in France, perhaps even in Europe. Her elder sister the Princess Elisa had been made Princess of Lucca.

She was intelligent and had good judgment. Later, when she had become Grand Duchess of Tuscany, she governed her realm as ably as a clever man would have done, and this in spite of the fact that she was not particularly well educated, although she had been brought up at the school at Saint Cyr. Her strength of will replaced book-learning.

All the members of the Bonaparte family were much attached to one another as long as there was no question of mutual ambition involved. In that case there would be an alliance formed against the one who happened to be favored. Soon, however, the union would be re-organized. The day the news of Elisa's appointment as Princess of Lucca became known my husband and I called on all his sisters. We began with Caroline. The latter with a forced laugh remarked: "Well, well, Elisa has become a ruling Prince now. To be sure her army is only a corporal's guard. What an honor that is to be sure!"

It was easy to note the vexation concealed beneath this flippancy. As for Princess Borghese she made no effort to hide her feelings. "My brother," she said, "only cares for Elisa and forgets all the rest of us. Caroline, who has children and a distinguished husband, deserves better treatment and more independence. So far as I am concerned, I don't ask for anything. I am an invalid, but it is not fair toward Caroline."

I saw that she was excited and to calm her I said "My sister, the Emperor loves you all equally. Elisa is the eldest. He begins with her. Later he will doubtless provide for you and for Caroline. He cannot do everything at once."

I thought this remark might soothe her and my husband confirmed my views, but she exclaimed warmly, "You are in no position to criticize, madame, you who obtain anything you ask for!" I remained silent with surprise. She had no idea of how mistaken she was.

To be sure, what I wanted had nothing to do with royal honors. I turned away and left her without saying another word. My husband kissed her, saying as he did so, "Pauline, you are not well." And we left the house. Of all the Emperor's sisters, Caroline, who had been for some time at school with me at Saint-Germain, was the only one I became ever at all intimate with.

Nor did I count very much on even her friendship. The petty vexations I had to suffer from this family proved that they did not like me. Nor were my mother and brother more popular with them. I had consolation in the thought that I had nothing with which to reproach myself. The Emperor went to spend a few days at Grignon, the handsome estate which Marshal Bessieres had bought from Monsieur Auguié.

I was glad of this opportunity to revisit the spots where some of the happiest hours of my youth had been spent. Here, close to the large pond, was a path that had been named after me; there, beside a little stream, was the place where I had run a fish-hook into my finger and in the midst of my weeping comrades displayed my courage by tearing it out without waiting for the arrival of a physician.

All these memories made me feel more light-hearted. My husband had not dared to refuse the Emperor's invitation for both of us. I had gone to Grignon without Louis, accompanied by the Princess of Baden, her husband, and the Prince of Bavaria. The Emperor spent his days hunting and retired early. We took tea in the evening with the Princess of Baden.

One day the idea of playing a trick on the Prince of Bavaria occurred to us. We put a wig on a doll, dressed it in a pretty nightcap and short nightgown and put it on his bed. We then composed a letter supposed to be from a lady who did not sign her name but who was most anxious to see him and who was awaiting him in his apartment.

A servant delivered him the note while we were all together. The Prince read it with an interest he was unable to conceal, took another letter from his pocket and compared the two. He stepped over to me and inquired anxiously, "Do you think the handwriting is the same?"

I assured him that it was evident the two letters had been written by the same person, the only difference being that one had been composed carefully, whereas the other had been dashed off hurriedly.

He was convinced that a lady was waiting for him and became greatly upset trying to find a way of getting rid of her for fear of what the Emperor might think. He took my arm, begged me to save him and to give orders that a woman who dared to be so forward in her advances be dismissed at once.

He gave me her name, and we thereby discovered that it was the famous Mademoiselle Georges whose letter he had and about whom he was so embarrassed. In spite of our laughter at seeing him so confused and at his disclosures, he refused to believe that it could be a joke.

He insisted we should all go to his apartment with him. He could not bear to go there alone, and his fear was intense for what the Emperor with his well-known severity in such matters might say. Finally, we all took lights and led him back through the long corridors. Our escort looked like a procession. The Prince of Bavaria was in front. Behind us came our ladies in waiting. Everyone else in the house had gone to bed. When we entered his room the Prince's fright and our mirth increased at the sight of a figure sleeping peacefully in his bed.

There the joke had to end. We were obliged to show him the wig on the doll. He seemed very much chagrined. The next morning the Emperor and Empress laughed heartily on hearing of our prank. I do not know whether the Prince, who laughed a great deal about it at the time, ever really forgave us.

CHAPTER VI

THE QUEEN OF HOLLAND: THE COURT OF KING LOUIS (MAY, 1806----APRIL, 1807)

Prince Louis Is Called to the Throne of Holland—Last Glimpse of France—Arrival at the Hague—Public Rejoicing, Private Misery—Trip to the Rhineland—The Battle of Jena—Two More Admirers—Portrait of Talleyrand—Home-Life of the King—Domestic Peace-Treaty and Why It Was Not Signed.

SUCH moments of innocent amusement were of brief duration. Youth needs them, but as soon as I returned to my home, I found myself once more in an atmosphere sternness and severity.

My sorrows were not yet complete. A delegation headed by Admiral Ver Huell arrived from Holland, and my husband informed me one morning that the Emperor had just told him that he, Louis, was to be King of Holland.

"I do hope you will not accept the appointment," I exclaimed. As a matter of fact I expected my husband to make the same objections he had employed when it was a question of giving a throne to his son, and I thought he would refuse this crown which he did not seem anxious to obtain.

As soon as the question of his nomination came up Caroline called on us. "I attended the marriage of Prince Eugene at Munich," she said, "only on the express understanding with the Emperor that I was to have the Dutch crown.

I do not wish to remind him of his promise without your consent, but will you not allow me to do so?" Both my husband and I assured her that we should be delighted to see her receive the crown, but she did not succeed in getting it.

My fate had ordained that these royal honors were to be the bitterest of all my afflictions since they involved a separation from all that was dear to me, from all I had in the way of consolation, from my family, from my friends, from the land which I had been taught to love so dearly, at a time when I was already miserable. I admit that my husband's calm manner surprised me. I did not believe he was ambitious, yet I recognized that he was well pleased with what had occurred.

Until then every change had been a source of annoyance to him. But now he enjoyed the idea of becoming independent, of becoming his own master and, what was more, of becoming my master at the same time. No longer would any social decorum, any sense of obligation restrain him from exercising his rights over me.

Freed from the proximity of his brother he had no longer any cause to fear him. This, as I understood later, was the reason for his secret joy and the apparent resignation with which he accepted the offered throne. As for me I had no illusions as to my fate; I knew my hardships would increase.

For a moment I had the idea of flinging myself at the Emperor's feet, revealing all the torments I suffered with my husband, and begging permission not to be obliged to follow him into a foreign country where nothing would restrain those traits in his character, which I knew so well and dreaded so

intensely. But when my eyes fell on my children the idea of being separated from them seemed to me the most cruel fate of all. I stifled my distress, I made up my mind to accompany these little ones and shower on their tender youth all that care of which it stood in such great need. I kept thinking of a tale which had made a deep impression on me in my own childhood of how a woman, having left her husband, returned to his house years afterwards and took the post of housekeeper, suffering rebuffs and humiliations of all kinds in order to be able to look after her dear children and live beside them.

I was convinced I was like the mother in this story, that ascending this throne was the same as entering into bondage. Thus, maternal love gave me the strength to accept my new and painful duties. Everything combined to cast a dark shroud over this rise in rank which caused me so much alarm. We were in mourning just then for the Princess of the Asturias. It was in black that I received the congratulations, which my tears might have made seem like an expression of condolence. Misfortune makes one superstitious.

My sadness in the midst of the general gloom made me still more alarmed as regards the future. Yet people thought I was happy. The Prince of Bavaria called on me at the same time as the Dutch envoys. My grief, which was apparent in spite of my efforts to conceal it, surprised him greatly and made him and the others fear that I disliked their country. The Emperor, in order to realize his plans, required his brothers to be ambitious. Of all the annoyances his family caused him he was the most prepared to pardon those which sprang from a desire for position and power, since those were the feelings he best understood. Hence, he could not forgive me for being down-cast because I was to be made a queen. "Can it be," he said, "that you are not worthy of such a position? To assume the crown, to make your subjects happy—that is a prospect which ought to delight your heart. I have done something for you the like of which is not to be found elsewhere. The constitution makes you regent in your own right.

This honor is a flattering one. Show that you deserve it." "Ah, Sire," I exclaimed, "you can do what you please. I shall always have middle-class ideals, if that is the term to apply to love for one's country, one's friends and one's family." He laughed at my remark and cut short my farewells with my mother in order to prevent too great a display of emotion.

At one time it had been suggested that my children remain in France on account of their being the sole heirs to the throne. The Council of State had been favorable to the idea, but the Emperor, who when my husband refused to allow him to adopt our son had caused a decree to be passed by which he became the legal guardian of all boys in his family after they had reached the age of seven, was reluctant to have this law infringed on, and perhaps also wished to avoid objection from us.

Monsieur de Talleyrand, who told me the above details, was very anxious to have his brother Boson de Perigord appointed as our grand chamberlain, but my husband refused. All the younger members of the French nobility who had not yet definitely rallied to the Imperial party at court thought they could reconcile their political attitude and their ambitions by seeking to obtain appointments at the Court of Holland. Monsieur Rainulphe d'Osmond asked for the post of chamberlain, another person that of equerry, but those whom my husband referred to as "agreeables" were not the kind of persons likely to appeal to him, and he declined to consider their requests.

As I was on the point of leaving for Holland Monsieur Adrien de Montmorency informed me that Madame de Gesvres, a woman eighty years of age, had been ordered to leave Paris. I went to Saint Cloud to see the Emperor in regard to the matter. When he learned that the unfortunate woman was so advanced in years, and especially that she was the last descendant of the famous Duguesclin, not only did he allow her to remain in Paris, but he bestowed on her an income of six thousand francs.

This is an example of how severe he could be when acting on reports received through the police service and how he would palliate this severity when informed of the truth. People of high rank should at least be able to enjoy that pleasure which comes from doing good, and this is a delight of which the heart never tires. Consequently, my most agreeable occupation before my departure was I to obtain favors for people in whom I was interested.

Nominations in the tax-collecting department were the only appointments which the Emperor made directly and which could be obtained through influence. All the other posts had to be applied for through the different departmental channels. For two years I had been seeking to obtain a position in the tax-collecting department, worth twenty thousand francs a year, for the fiancé of one of Adele's cousins. The family of the girl were eagerly awaiting this appointment before concluding the arrangements for the marriage. I had already several times bored the Emperor with my petitions in regard to this matter, when one day I heard that unimportant though the post was it had been given to another candidate.

I did not dare speak to the Emperor again about it directly, but I complained to my mother saying that, having promised me a favor which would cause rejoicing in a family in which I was interested, he forgot my petition and did not even grant me this small wish. My mother reported my indignation to the Emperor, and it had the desired effect. The Emperor laughed, and that same evening sent me a note appointing my protégé receiver general of taxes in one of the principal cities in France, a position carrying with it an income of 100,000 francs.

How delighted I was at the thought of the happiness I was about to dispense. I myself bore the glad tidings to that modest household whose members a moment before might have been complaining at the harshness of Fate, and which now was safe from everything except the shock of a too sudden felicity. The marriage of Adele was another matter that was much on my mind at this time. I was as difficult to please in making my choice of a husband for her as I had been in selecting one for myself. No one seemed to measure up to my standards. It was agreed that she should join me in Holland, where I hoped to find a man worthy of her. I must do my husband the justice of saying that in spite of his usual suspiciousness of all women he never dared suspect the character of Adele. Her gentle nature, her well-balanced mind obliged him, as they did everyone else, to submit to her charm and at the same time to admire her.

For a long while he sought to make her act as judge of our domestic difficulties. He explained to her his grievances and attempted to justify his conduct. Not being able to convince her that he was in the right, he finally ceased to honor her with his confidence. When I said good-by to Adele the hope of seeing one another in the near future assuaged our grief. Saint-Leu had been fixed as the point from

which we were to start on our journey. My husband and all my household were already there. I came back late one day from Saint Cloud where I had with so much difficulty said farewell to my mother and I stopped at Paris to make final arrangements.

The courtyard of my house was full of baggage carts and people. The first part of our baggage train was about to leave. All this bustle and the sight of the horses which were to take me away from home were painful to me. Two days more and I in turn should be saying adieu to France.

Finally, the carts started and complete silence took the place of the earlier confusion. At that moment the only servant remaining in the house informed me that a visitor was asking for me who wished to speak to me in private. It was Monsieur de Flahaut.

The fact that it was impossible for him to enter my house under normal conditions had not prevented him from casting aside all prudence in his desire to bid me good-by.

For the first time since I knew that he was dear to me I found myself alone with him. Alarm and emotion held me spellbound. As he stepped nearer to me, I uttered a cry. "Remember," he said, "people may come in and you would be compromised."

"Ah," I replied, "I do not care what people think about me as long as I do not do any harm." Then, with the utmost simplicity, I confessed my love for him. At the same time, however, I declared that dear as he was to me virtue was still dearer, since it was virtue alone which sustained me in the midst of my husband's hideous suspicions, that it was my only true consolation, and without it I could not survive.

I told him I wished him every happiness, I assured him he would always have my friendship. I left him in a condition that cannot be expressed in words. I was proud of having such control over him, and the consoling thought came to me in the midst of the tears evoked by so sad a parting that at last the man whose admiration meant so much to me knew what was in my heart. Yet how much dearer a person becomes when he has seen us to our best advantage, when he has been able to appreciate our qualities, especially if others are blind to them and accuse us unjustly.

My husband, my children and I finally left Saint-Leu on the evening of June 15, 1806. My eldest son slept all night on my knees, the other boy on those of his governess. My husband and I, absorbed in our own thoughts and without saying a word to one another, probably both suffered from the fact that we were unable to share our common grief or seek consolation from the person whom sacred ties should have rendered dear to us.

Each looked upon Destiny as his only friend. I shall not describe our journey in detail. The martial escorts, the honors, receptions and speeches only wearied me. I wrote my mother from the Château of Laeken near Brussels, and I wrote the Emperor from Antwerp asking him to pardon a prisoner who had been sentenced.

Now came the most painful moment of all, that instant when I was obliged to leave our French escort and when I caught sight of the Dutch authorities waiting for us on the other side of the frontier. Change one's nationality! Become something else than French! Sorrowfully I cast my eyes back to the land where I had been born. Should I ever see it again? Should I ever again meet my friends? Should they not forget me? At that moment I felt as though I were doomed to remain forever a stranger, both to those I now left behind me, and to those who were about to adopt me. I found myself cut off from everything and everybody absolutely, by a separation comparable with that which makes death so dreadful to us.

My throbbing heart prevented my replying to the speech with which the Dutch authorities greeted me. My husband did so for both of us. However deep his own grief seemed, he knew how to reply to complimentary phrases and did so all along the way. We stopped at the Palais du Bois near the Hague and made our entry there a few days later. I have always been so anxious to reassure and place at their ease those whom my presence might intimidate that the art of receiving guests and visitors came to me naturally.

For instance, at a reception where four hundred women were presented to me, I found something to say to each one. One day Admiral Ver Huell appeared to me to be much embarrassed. He had assumed the reins of office during the time between our appointment and our arrival and, in accordance with the English custom which was followed in Holland for the Prince and Princess of Orange, he had placed my name beside that of the King in the public prayers.

The first act of my husband was to remove the name of the Queen. The Admiral pointed out the bad impression this would make, especially as the custom had been in force for a month. He even came to tell me about it, thinking that I would protest. But what was there to be done? I could not help feeling hurt at this courtesy on the part of my husband, although I should have been so accustomed to it as not to notice it any longer.

Another time the general commanding the royal guard came to ask me to tie the new ribbons to the regimental colors. I wrote to Paris for ribbons embroidered like those which my mother had distributed to the Imperial guard but with my name instead of hers on them. When my husband saw the ribbons he had them taken off, saying that my name was ridiculously prominent, and that it looked as though it were I who had presented the flags.

Such annoying incidents occurred so frequently that I sought to efface myself more and more. I limited my activities to my maternal duties and to my customary occupations such as painting, writing songs and taking history lessons from the Abbe Bertrand. Much to my astonishment the King, who was organizing his official household, filled the most important posts with Frenchmen chosen from among those who had followed him to Holland.

None of them expected as much. They had thought they would only spend three months each year at our court on special missions from France. They were delighted. The Dutch very properly protested against this proceeding, and misunderstandings between the two parties arose.

Monsieur de Senegra, whom the Emperor had never been willing to receive, obtained the most prominent position [that of general inspector and head of the navy department]. Everyone had cause to complain against his spying and his frequent lack of manners. Although my husband had not spoken to me for some time, one day we had a long conversation.

He first sent me a letter reviewing the entire history of our married life. His affection for me, his regrets and my coldness toward him were all described in detail. Later he came in person to beg for a reconciliation. "Stop," I said. "I no longer consent to such a thing. My sorrows have been too great. I have been spared nothing, neither your unjust suspicions nor your scandalous investigations into my conduct. I have forgiven you, but so much pain has inevitably altered my feelings toward you. Change your conduct, and my sentiments toward you will change also. I shall not try to give you a false impression, but you must make me forget the past, make me care for you again, and this requires time. It cannot be done at once."

He became angry, shed a few tears and told me that he did not believe in woman's virtue, that I had been unhappy and had certainly sought to console myself.

"True," I replied, "and I had one consolation at least of which you could not deprive me, the knowledge I did not deserve the treatment you inflicted on me."

My husband left me without having uttered a word of affection or of regret.

Our entry into Rotterdam was remarkable for the enthusiasm of the spectators. It is the same thing everywhere; people love a change and expect what is new will be an improvement. My only sensation was one of fear when I felt myself carried along by a mob that seemed to have gone mad.

In spite of our efforts we had not been able to prevent the crowd from unharnessing our horses and drawing our carriage along by hand. This explosive joy so similar to furious rage froze me with terror. My nerves were too weak to bear the sight, and every moment I imagined someone was being crushed beneath our wheels.

"Alas!" I said to my husband as I remembered tales I had heard from Madame Campan, "these are receptions such as were held in France to celebrate the arrival of Marie Antoinette. Later the mob sacrificed her with equal enthusiasm."

It was not the moment to indulge in such painful memories. My state of mind affected everything I saw. Nevertheless, I witnessed one spectacle that was truly an imposing one---the launching of a magnificent man-of-war. This is a ceremony so impressive that it appeals strongly to the imagination.

We did not remain long in Holland but Went on to Wiesbaden where the King wished to take the waters on account of his health. We lived in the Palace of Mayence.

The Grand Duchess of Darmstadt as well as many foreign princes and those belonging to the house of Nassau came to see us. The latter gave us a charming entertainment at the palace.

Prince Charles of Nassau told me one day that he had heard how popular I was already in Holland, a country which had been greatly attached to the family of the Prince of Orange. People knew I was related to this family, and he himself gloried in that fact. I considered the compliment rather exaggerated.

I knew there had been a marriage between my family and that of Bavaria and Nassau, but it had occurred so long ago it was not to be taken seriously. Indeed, it struck me as highly probable that it was the crown I now wore which caused people to recall this relationship.

I had never paid any attention to it and it was merely by chance that I knew of it and understood the Prince's compliment. On the other hand, I never had any reason to feel hostile to his family and would gladly have exchanged my royal rank for a little of their peace of mind. Everywhere I went something disagreeable or unpleasant happened.

When I passed through Nimiguen with my husband I was so ill I could not continue my journey. The King went on alone and I followed two days later. I did not know my new courier any better than I knew the other members of our household.

Catching sight of him running beside the carriage with tears streaming down his cheeks, I asked the reason. It seems he had just lost the purse which had been given him to pay the post horses, and expected that the equerry in charge would oblige him to meet the loss out of his own pocket. The sum was about a thousand francs. I told him not to worry, that I would give him the money. I did so on our arrival and forgot all about the matter.

This man was sent back to Paris. I gave him no letter to take back, but Madame de Villeneuve and Mademoiselle Cochelet gave him some notes for their family.

On his return my husband's secretary, acting on his master's orders, had the courier searched and demanded the letters he was thought to be bringing me, concealed about his person. The gift of the thousand francs had become known I was supposed to have bribed the messenger. In spite of all the threats he was unable to hand over what he did not have in his possession.

It is easy to imagine how deeply my feelings were hurt when the courier told me of the treatment he had undergone, at the same time offering me his services and assuring me of his devotion. I had been reduced to this: a servant believed he could be of service to me, and even his devotion was an insult.

I fancy, however, that my torments cannot have been as great as those of my husband. His restless nature did not give him an instant's peace. Our apartments were some distance apart. Frequently I heard him in the drawing-room, when everyone else had retired, steal up and listen outside my door. One evening one of my ladies in waiting with whom I was chatting while getting undressed

came near having to spend the night in my room, for the next morning my chambermaid and I discovered that we had been locked in.

Generally, we laughed about so many strange occurrences, but they injured my reputation to such an extent that I felt them deeply. My husband, leaving the waters of Wiesbaden, went to Aix-la-Chapelle, where I followed him two days later. Adele had joined me at Mayence. I sent all my carriages and the officers of my household to wait for me at Cologne and embarked on the Rhine aboard the handsome yacht belonging to the Prince of Nassau.

Monsieur Auguié, who had come there in order to bring his daughter to me, was the only man who accompanied me while we were on the water. The weather was fine, the scenery delightful. We spent our time admiring the different landmarks which passed before our eyes.

These rocks, these towered keeps recalled the age of chivalry. The sight of them transported me back to the past, away from the age we live in, which always seems the least attractive. My eldest son played near at hand, while I sang ballads and accompanied myself on my guitar. I also composed some ballads myself, inspired by the beauties of the landscape.

Many pilgrims, such as I had never seen before, followed us reciting psalms, and from the neighboring shores the villagers put out in boats to bring fruit and flowers. In the evening we anchored and fell asleep, each in a little cabin, soothed by the sound of a serenade from some village nearby.

This calm after so much agitation, this freedom after so much constraint combined to make these three days of sailing three of the happiest in my life. When we arrived at Cologne, I saw the entire population waiting for me on the shore.

What an abrupt contrast. The calm solitude had delighted me; the sight of this crowd revived the memory of my rank and the sense of my duties. I wished to preserve as long as possible the memories of the days just past. I stepped on shore before reaching the official landing-stage, and on foot, leading my son by the hand, I sought to discover the nearest inn. But I was quickly surrounded by a numerous escort commanded by General Dupont.

There was nothing to be done. I admitted to the General that he had outmaneuvered me and I climbed into the great stage-coach, big enough for six people, which had doubtless belonged to the former elector. I was obliged to pass through the city at a snail's pace in the midst of a curious crowd, and in the evening attend a ball given for me by the Grand Duke of Berg, who was staying at Dusseldorf. His wife Princess Caroline had stayed in Paris, dissatisfied with her husband's appointment as Grand Duke of Berg and Cleves, which she considered less than his and her—desert. She never would consent to go there.

On leaving France I thought I had said a last farewell to all those whom I cared for. Fate ruled otherwise. Monsieur de Flahaut passed through Aix-la-Chapelle while we were still there. He accompanied the Grand Duke of Berg when the latter called to say good-by before joining the army which was marching on Prussia.

Nothing is more painful than the sight of the man who is dear to you leaving to expose his life. How sad it is not to be able to say a word of farewell, to be obliged to stifle in one's bosom all one's prayers and fears! When he returned to Holland my husband was obliged to take command of the army that was marching towards Wesel. As a raid by the English forces was feared, owing to the country's having been stripped of troops, it was decided my children and I should go and live with my mother, who had accompanied the Emperor to Mayence and was to remain there for the duration of the war.

The Princess of Baden also came there from Mannheim where she was living. We witnessed the arrival of all those young ladies, who considered us their natural protectors and who were anxious to have news of their husbands.

Our time was spent in waiting for messengers from the front and praying for the success of our army. The day of my arrival I heard of the combat at Saalfeld where Prince Louis of Prussia was killed. I had often heard him well spoken of, and his death affected me as much as though I had known him personally.

The Battle of Jena dealt Prussia a mortal blow from which she seemed unlikely to recover. The Emperor had accustomed us so thoroughly to the idea of victory that the possibilities of a defeat never entered our minds. Our only anxiety was for the lives of the combatants, our only alarm was the thought of the dangers to which they were exposed.

A battle which seemed decisive aroused our enthusiasm because it made us anticipate a speedy end to the conflict. This however was still in the distant future. Every day thousands of prisoners passed through Mayence and marched by under the windows of my house which was situated opposite the bridge. frequently gave them money. They were unfortunate; therefore we considered them as no different from Frenchmen. We received in a body all the generals and officers belonging to Hesse-Cassel.

My mother was so tactful, consoling them for their defeat, in offering them her protection that they almost forgot they were prisoners in the enemy's country. The Princess of Nassau and her daughter came every Sunday to see the Empress, and as our armies advanced the princes from the different occupied territories appeared to ask for my mother's protection.

The Princess of Gotha, daughter of the Elector of Hesse-Cassel, was one of those with whom we sympathized most on account of her gentle manner and her father's misfortune. Among the official reports which reached us several contained uncomplimentary remarks about the Queen of Prussia.

We regretted this, and my mother wrote the Emperor in regard to it. He answered that he detested scheming women more than anything else in the world, especially as she (the Empress) had accustomed him to women who were gentle and kind.

He told her too how the tears of Madame d'Hatzfeld and her deep emotion had caused him to pardon her husband and that consequently he did not deserve to be called unfair in his treatment of her sex.

At Mayence regiments known as guards of honor were quartered. These regiments were composed of young men belonging to the best and richest families in France who, rather than begin their military career as privates in one of the line regiments, preferred these special corps.

The Emperor had placed these regiments under the command of Monsieur de Montmorency-Laval. Marshal Kellermann was in charge of their general organization and appointed the officers from among the recruits themselves. Monsieur de Talleyrand asked me one day to recommend Monsieur de La Bedoyère, a cousin of Monsieur de Flahaut. What a good reason for me to interest myself in him! I obtained his nomination as second lieutenant, and he came to thank me. The officers were in the habit of calling on the Empress in the evening. I spoke more with Monsieur de La Bedoyère than with the others.

The desire to make a good impression on the person one cares about is so natural that unconsciously we are inclined to seek out those who are related to him by ties of birth or affection and who will talk about us to him. We are more anxious to please these relatives perhaps because we feel at ease with them and in speaking to one we think of the other.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère was a highly-strung man full of romantic ideas which he concealed under an icy manner. He had enlisted against the wishes of his parents and against his own political conviction. Although hostile to the Emperor he did not consider that this prevented him from entering a career which he considered honorable.

His face and figure were strikingly handsome, but his character was unsociable. Detesting society, he had adopted a surly attitude and an abrupt manner of speaking. Women feared rather than admired him. They felt him to be an ironic and severe critic of their behavior. In spite of this he was an admirer of Madame de Stael, with whom he had acted tragedies at Coppet, for he had as fine a diction as Talma himself.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère had discovered, thanks to his sense of values, that drawing-room successes do not mean as much as honors gained on the field of glory. He had deserted society in order to play a part in another, sterner and more glorious setting.

The talks I had with him were all about idealism and the principles of magnanimity. I never imagined our talks were of a kind calculated to give him a far too flattering opinion of me, an opinion which later interfered with his happiness. We went to Frankfort for a few days' visit to the Prince-Primate who gave very fine receptions in our honor.

Evening parties, concerts, balls and excursions filled the short time we spent there. I attended a masked ball where the novelty of the scene amused me greatly, but where I felt much embarrassed and did not venture to speak to anyone or leave the arm of my Dutch lady in waiting. All the people had imagined they recognized me and crowded about a lady seated in a chair specially prepared for me. It was one of the Emperor's pages who took my part. This mistake in itself was enough to amuse me. On our return to Mayence Monsieur de La Bedoyère assured me that he had recognized a woman with a

mask with whom he had had a long conversation. If I wished, he could repeat this talk word for word as he had written it all down.

He asked to be allowed to present me the account the next day. Curious to know if someone had passed herself off for me I took the paper, and as the incident had taken place at a reception, on my return home I began to read his note aloud to the ladies who were in attendance. It was a love-letter, delicately and tactfully worded but so indiscreet and so flattering that I did not dare believe it intended for me.

In this note Monsieur de La Bedoyère declared that for a long time he had dreamed of an ideal being. Life had taught him how rare it is to encounter a woman worthy of one's love. He had followed the ordinary rounds of pleasures, filled with contempt for them and longing to find his ideal. Suddenly when he had given up all hope he discovered this ideal before him exactly as he had imagined her, equally fair, equally kind, equally virtuous. He recognized the extent of his misfortune, he knew how remote from him his vision remained and all that stood between them.

Her very moral perfection was a greater obstacle even than her rank. But at least he had beheld the object of his dreams. No longer would his fancy roam idly this way and that, now all his ardor was turned toward a definite goal. She, who had not been able to conceal her identity beneath a mask, would from now on become his lode-star, the guide of his destiny, the influence that would make him do good and keep him from evil.

He desired to have the opportunity to say all that he dared hardly write. Surely, she would not take offense as the speaker would be a man about to take his departure, perhaps forever. He ended his letter by begging the person who had asked him to write it to forgive his having done so. I was extremely embarrassed.

I refused to admit that these phrases were meant for me. My name was not mentioned, but all my ladies assured me I was the person referred to. I was the more surprised as Monsieur de La Bedoyère had never said a word that would have made me think he was interested in me.

I was also much annoyed at having revealed to strangers sentiments the writer had certainly not intended them to know. To be sure I was not really to blame for I had had no idea of the contents of the letter, but as a matter of principle I believe one cannot be too discreet as regards matters of sentiment, and I was vexed at having disclosed anyone's secret.

I saw Monsieur de La Bedoyère again and made no reference to the matter. He seemed unhappy and ill at ease. I no longer had any doubt as to the identity of his ideal and reproached myself for having been unduly agreeable to him. He had not guessed the motive for my actions, he had misinterpreted them. I had been wrong, and it was necessary for me to remedy my fault and calm the over-enthusiasm of which he might be the victim.

I am always prompt in the execution of a plan that seeks to achieve some good purpose. The more difficult it is for me to carry it out, the more I persuade myself it must be done and that I must

overcome my natural reluctance which alone prevents. Consequently, on the same evening that I had made up my mind how to act, I approached Monsieur de La Bedoyère and, in the course of our conversation, I uttered the following speech in a firm although somewhat embarrassed voice:

"I should deeply regret it if anyone became attached to me. I could not return his affection. I only care for the respect of those who know me, my fate and my feelings have been fixed once and for all, and only misfortune could befall a person who cares for me in the least."

There is a certain inner satisfaction that only can be felt by a highly refined conscience. I was pleased with myself. I believed I had cured a man who was suffering, even though I had been obliged to lessen his good opinion of me. I had, to be sure, sacrificed my vanity to some extent, but I had performed a good deed, and when you feel you have done that, you experience a sense of satisfaction greater than any flattery to your self-esteem.

Meanwhile Monsieur de La Bedoyère left to join the army. When he said good-by to me he was obviously moved. His generally severe manner made his emotion all the more apparent. About this same time there arrived at Mayence a young man at the point of death.

How sad I felt when I discovered that this, too, was my fault. I heard about it through Mademoiselle Cochelet. When in Paris, she often met at the house of one of her mother's friends a Monsieur de Charette de la Coliniere, nephew of the famous Charette de la Vendee. He had heard Mademoiselle Cochelet's complimentary remarks about me and listened with interest, making her describe the sorrows of my home-life, of which she was so frequent a witness.

She herself had been strongly attracted by this young man, so gifted in mind and so handsome in person that few women dared to go about with him for fear of being stared at.

Since the subject interested him, she talked frequently of me in order to secure his attention. He never saw me except in the ballroom and never spoke to me, but finally his imagination was fired by hearing me praised so often, and he declared that he loved me.

Mademoiselle Cochelet instead of being jealous considered his feelings quite natural. She had been aware of his sentiments before he knew them himself, felt responsible for having aroused them, and was happy to have them confided to her. The more he talked about me, the more she cared for him.

He enlisted in the regiment of La Tour d'Auvergne in the hope of being nearer to me, left it when I went to Holland, and under cover of a pleasure trip through that country came there for the purpose of catching a glimpse of me.

He arrived the very day I was leaving for Wiesbaden. The fatigue of the journey and grief at my departure affected his health, which was already delicate. He broke a blood vessel in his chest, returned to Paris spitting blood, but instead of taking care of himself came back to Mayence to take part in the campaign.

When he arrived there, he was too feeble to go any farther. Mademoiselle Cochelet was overcome with grief to have been the cause of such a tragedy and told me everything. Although I reproached her for having talked so much about me, the harm had been done. I asked her, nevertheless, to say as many disagreeable things regarding me as she had previously said flattering ones.

Mademoiselle Cochelet begged me out of kindness to receive Monsieur de la Charette just once in order to persuade him to return to his family. I did so. I pretended to know nothing about his sentiments towards me and talked entirely about how much Mademoiselle Cochelet cared for him. He showed that he appreciated what she did for him and before he left, he ceased to speak of me and asked her to become his wife. His death put an end to this plan.

I only heard of it several months later at a time when the intensity of my own grief prevented me from being greatly affected by the news. It was during this journey that I became better acquainted with Monsieur de Talleyrand. I had often wondered how people could praise his wit and consider him so clever when he so rarely displayed those qualities.

For years I had watched him enter the drawing-room of Malmaison with his careless and distant air. He dragged along his clubfoot, leaned against the first chair he encountered, and barely bowed to the people present.

He hardly ever spoke to me. At Mayence, (on the other hand) he sought my company and took the trouble to make himself agreeable. I was surprised and even flattered. The attentions of a man who is generally aloof make a special impression.

I am convinced that Monsieur de Talleyrand's reputation for cleverness, which I admit he deserves, is less the result of anything remarkable that he does than of the little he says, but says so well.

He is chiefly remarkable for his epigrams, his perfect tact, his great skill in discovering the reasons for other people's actions and concealing his own motives, the self-confidence of a great lord and a natural tolerant indolence, which makes him so easy and agreeable to get on with that people consider it a sign of kindness of heart.

He is indulgent toward all forms of vice, and is willing to listen patiently to plans of schemers, especially if their projects have any chance of success. His only comment on what he is told is an approving smile, and he takes care to alarm no one and to exploit success by whomever it has been achieved.

The attractive quality of his mind makes up for his lack of moral strength, and he finds himself at the head of a movement which people think he organized when in reality he was hardly even the confidant of those who really started it.

His very reputation for possessing great charm, although founded on fact, is largely due to the vanity of those with whom he comes in contact. I myself succumbed to it. The day he condescends to

speak to you you are conquered by the fact that he does so, and you are quite prepared to adore him if he merely asks after your health.

Monsieur de Remusat, who trimmed his sails to every breeze, followed Monsieur de Talleyrand about and, imitating his model, no longer said a word in the hope that by adopting this pose he might make himself seem important.

At Mayence he was said to keep the police informed of what went on in society. He sent reports to Marshal Duroc, and the young ladies did not dare to be seen chatting with young men for fear of providing material for the reports of Monsieur de Remusat.

I had hoped for an instant to go to Berlin with my mother for the signing of the peace, but the war kept on. My husband left the army of which he was in command and wrote me to return to the Hague. As long as he was in danger, I forgot all the harm he had done me, but when I no longer had any reason to feel alarmed on his account, I began to fear for myself.

Being accustomed to obey I left Mayence shortly after New Year's Day, 1807. I re-member the date because if I had been inclined to believe in premonitions, I should have had good reason to be alarmed just then.

Every time anyone wished me Happy New Year tears came to my eyes. My present distress was enough to dampen my spirits, and besides that, I was about to leave my mother without knowing when I should see her again. I was returning to a foreign land where no one knew me, where there was no one to protect me. And from whom did I need to be protected? From my husband. In addition to all this, I foresaw, I do not know why, still more trouble in the near future. I was frightened at my state of mind. "What is going to happen to me this year?" I asked Adele when I found myself alone with her.

"What can be worse than what you endure?" she replied.

"Have you not enough reason to be unhappy without inventing imaginary ones?" Her common sense impressed me, but sometimes a painful mood continues without any good ground for it.

I left Mayence deeply depressed. The season was bitterly cold. Nevertheless, my always delicate health had somewhat improved. I arrived at the Hague a few days after the sad accident at Leyden.

My husband on this occasion had behaved in a manner that had won the admiration of the Dutch. As soon as the news of the explosion reached him, he hastened to the spot, encouraged the rescue-parties, and in order to save those who were injured did not hesitate to expose himself to the danger of being crushed by the tottering walls.

My heart ached as I passed through this city. I wished to do my share in helping the unfortunate victims and I gave twenty thousand francs for those who were the most in need.

My husband objected but I insisted on doing this. As a rule, he did much for the poor. Even in Paris he gave large sums, and in Holland his gifts were enormous. If I happened to give someone a fixed income in response to a request for help, I was sure that if he heard of it, he would double the amount without being asked.

It seemed as though he were trying to efface the impression made by what I had done. I may have been mistaken in thinking this but at any rate I believed it at the time.

Consequently, instead of visiting charitable organizations, helping them extend their work, and in general concerning myself with philanthropy as a queen should do, I only went out driving and displayed the most complete indifference to everything that went on in order to give no grounds for my husband's displeasure.

When I arrived at the Hague, the King had already been there some time. In the evening my ladies in waiting and the officers of his household were in the habit of meeting in his apartments. There was no formality about these receptions and it was more like a family gathering than a royal court.

People played parlor games, and sometimes the fun became even boisterous. As soon as I was back no one was allowed to enter my drawing room any longer. Everything became serious and impressive and even the simplest gatherings were forbidden. One morning, without any reason being given, all the French who had rooms at the palace received orders to leave at once and secure quarters in town.

Not a moment's delay was allowed, and everyone wondered "What can have happened last night? What can be the cause of this abrupt and drastic order?" A little later a still more extraordinary order was issued.

From six o'clock on no one was allowed to enter or leave the palace without a card signed by Monsieur Senegra. Tradespeople were arrested, others thought they would be obliged to spend the night in the halls. Every day there would be misunderstandings and ridiculous situations which people laughed about among themselves and which I heard of only through my young ladies.

I could not see the humor in these incidents as they did, for to me they had too serious a meaning. The Dutch thought at first that all these precautions which they could not understand were due to suspicions regarding them, and they were indignant.

Later, when they discovered that it was all owing to domestic misunderstandings—a thing which surprised them greatly, for we had arrived with the reputation of being a model couple—they paid no more attention to the new regulations. As I always considered my husband's obvious jealousy a public insult, I had been much embarrassed by the first appointments he had made in Holland of the members of my household.

My equerry was the Baron de Renesse, a very worthy man who, had he lived in the days of Cervantes, might have served as model for Don Quixote. The chamberlain Monsieur Van der Dun was

still more ridiculous in appearance, although with a fine mind.

The Frenchmen, who always love a joke, insisted that he looked like a Sancho Panza who had swallowed a jumping-jack. The other members of my household were of the same kind. Of all the handsome Brussels guard of honor who formed part of our escort, and of all the young men belonging to the best families of France, who had asked for posts at our court, the King chose only Monsieur de Marmol, a fine man in everything except looks. These appointments were so arbitrary and so evidently inspired by my husband's jealousy that they always annoyed me.

As my equerries were all of them at least sixty years old I never dared ride fast when I went out on horseback on their account. A Frenchman who was only fifty was not allowed to remain long attached to my household. He was ordered back to his regiment and obliged to leave within twenty-four hours.

It was in vain that Monsieur de Caulaincourt, our high chamberlain, intervened, asking that the man be permitted at least to finish his week's service in order not to seem to have been dismissed through some fault of his own.

Monsieur de Caulaincourt's intervention was useless. It appeared that in spite of his years the man might have attracted me. At all the state receptions I went around the room and spoke to everyone. The King told me that I remained standing too long, that it tired him and that it would be enough merely to nod and not stop and speak to those present.

At the following reception I obeyed his instructions. To my surprise I saw that he did exactly what he had forbidden me, going up to each person and making a few pleasant remarks.

Meanwhile I remained alone standing by the chimney and waiting for him to finish. How can such jealousy be explained? I had brought my old friend, the wife of Marshal Duroc, with me from Mayence. She returned to France and took Adele with her. I have already mentioned that the latter was an exception to my husband's universal jealousy and I have spoken of his efforts to gain her esteem.

He willingly consented to her marriage with Monsieur de Broc, Grand Marshal of the Palace, who had been in love with her for a long time. Adele loved her husband but only after she became his bride. She was too intelligent to allow herself to become unduly enthusiastic over the prospect of any marriage, and even after her family had decided that the match was a suitable one, she felt merely grateful for the affection which she knew she aroused.

In France she had had many opportunities to get married. The fact that she was known to be my friend was in itself enough to attract certain ambitious men. I had always refused to consider such suitors.

Monsieur de Broc, brave, kind, and upright in character, belonging to a good family, possessing a brilliant social position, and loving her tenderly, was nevertheless not a very romantic figure. He was no hero out of a story book, but I had come to believe that a really kind heart is enough to make one's

married life happy.

The idea of a marriage which would keep Adele with me was attractive. How many times afterwards did she speak to me about their peaceful, harmonious union, about her husband's respect for her and his love which almost amounted to idolatry!

"Why could you not have had a husband like mine?" she would say. "I imagined all husbands were more or less like yours in character. I expected jealousy and unkind treatment, and instead I find thoughtfulness and sincere affection.

My knowledge of your home-life makes mine seem all the more agreeable. How I should like to give you some scrap of this happiness, which you would so appreciate and which you so well deserve!"

I was delighted that my friend should be happy but did not envy her that happiness of which she was more worthy than anyone I knew. Monsieur de Broc left for Paris to marry her. After Adele's departure and that of Madame Duroc my life grew still more dreary. Till then the presence of my friends had acted as a restraint on my husband. Now there was no reason for him to spare my feelings.

He took pleasure in making our discord known and attracted public attention to our domestic difficulties. He came to my part of the palace only at dinner time by the state stairways and went back to his own apartments immediately afterward. He went to the theater alone, gave informal evening concerts, to which my ladies in waiting were invited, but from which I was excluded.

I bore all these strange whims patiently. I endured them in silence as long as they did not become a topic for public gossip. What was I to do now that I had become the victim of his opinions? Even if he tried to be fair and impartial, he was obliged, on account of the way in which he had treated me, to believe that I had done wrong in order to justify himself in his own eyes. I should have done the same had I been called upon to judge a woman in the same predicament as that in which I found myself.

Was it possible to imagine that a husband deliberately sought to ruin his wife's reputation simply for the satisfaction of besmirching her and without even a shadow of evidence against her? All these thoughts drove me to despair. A prisoner in my palace, I no longer dared receive even the visits of my young ladies in waiting or leave my apartment to go and see one of them if she happened to be ill. A valet who had followed one of the royalist exiles abroad was engaged to wait on me.

He always slept in my anteroom and wrote down how many times my young ladies came in to see me. I often noticed that, when bringing in wood for the fire without anyone having ordered him to do so, he would push aside the curtains in front of the windows to see if there were not someone behind them. I pretended not to notice these actions. I knew too well whose orders and instructions he was obeying to wish to have them repeated to me by a servant.

Madame de Boubers once found this man hidden in my children's room. She was alarmed on their account and considered it her duty to mention the matter to my husband, who sent him away for a little while. How often have I, when alone with my children, one on my knees, the other playing beside

me, composed some melancholy ballad or wept as I embraced them. The eldest looked at me as though he sympathized with my troubles. In spite of his youth he seemed to understand my grief. His affection for me was beyond words.

The King called him one day to sit beside him, but the little boy would not leave me. I asked him to do so, explaining that his father would be cross with him, but he took my hand and nestled closer to my side. I noticed that my husband looked annoyed. The idea occurred to me to say to the child, "Your father will be cross with me!" Immediately he ran to Louis with an eagerness which touched me. When some visitor in my drawing-room exhibited a talent as a singer and received applause my son would come over to me and say in a low voice: "Please sing too, mama, to show how well you sing."

Once when I was overcome with grief, I heard him say in a whisper to his brother, who wished to go to his nurse, "Stay with mother. She's crying. She feels badly."

These words renewed my courage. "Here I have my consolation," I exclaimed, pressing them both to my bosom. "God is just; everything on earth has its compensation. My happiness lies in my children. They can never fail me."

At other times such thoughts increased my sadness. "The world will condemn me," I said to myself. "My children are too young to be able to judge for themselves. Someday their affection for me will be tarnished by the evil reports that may be repeated in their presence." This idea increased my sorrow. I did not know what refuge my imagination could find.

Incredible as it may seem I even came to believe that only a surprise attack by the English troops in which I should be taken prisoner would give me a few moments' respite. My favorite walk was along the dunes. From there I could see some large English vessels which were doubtless engaged in the smuggling trade. I left my carriage waiting for me some distance off on the highway.

Accompanied only by my ladies in waiting, I approached the sea and seemed to expose myself intentionally, putting myself within the enemy's grasp. I fancied that if I were captured, they would shut me up in a tower but would let me have drawing materials. There at least I should breathe freely. There too my reputation would no longer be attacked, and although separated from my children they would be brought up to love and respect my memory.

Such were my fondest hopes, but if I stopped and thought of my children's extreme youth, if I imagined one of them ill and needing my care, then I would banish these mad and foolish ideas and resign myself to my sad fate. After this life of torment and tears had lasted some time my husband one day came upstairs to see me, a letter from the Emperor in his hand. He was much upset.

"You must have been complaining about me," he said. "This is what my brother writes. How unfortunate I am!" I read the following reproaches from the Emperor: "I have heard the manner in which you treat your wife. All those about you are scandalized at your conduct. I wish you were as so many men are in Paris. You would be deceived and perhaps be happier. Instead of that I gave you a

virtuous wife, and you do not know how to appreciate her."

I returned the letter to my husband, assuring him that I had never complained to anyone and that as a matter of fact he read everything I wrote the Emperor.

"Then it must be the French Ambassador," he insisted angrily. "I shall refuse to receive him any more alone. He shall only be allowed to call with the rest of the diplomatic corps.

How unfair people are! To dare to say that I treat you badly. Please write my brother that there is not a word of truth in these reports." I did as he asked and in my letter to the Emperor, I found courage to say that I was happy. By some curious chance the English newspapers a short time later repeated the reproaches the Emperor had made my husband about the way in which he treated me. This would indicate that not all of my husband's secretaries were French.

I do not know if he appreciated my behavior and my refusal to make public my just cause for complaint. At all events he inflicted a new form of torture on me. One evening he came up the secret stairway that connected his room with mine and gave me to understand that my life and my reputation were in his hands.

"I love you," he declared. "You know that. But I am ashamed to be obliged to pass as my wife's discarded lover. Let us set an example of perfect harmony, of complete domestic happiness. Then you will find me again at your knees. But you, on your part, whenever we are in public must give demonstrative signs of your affection for me. A woman's honesty is judged by the degree in which she adores her husband."

"I cannot deceive you," I replied. "I do not know what the outward signs of a wife's love for her husband may be. I shall never behave other than seems suitable to me. As far as my affection for you is concerned you have crushed it. I am far from my country, my family, my friends. You are all I have. Be kind to me and I will love you, but one cannot in a day forget what one has suffered. Be a father to me. I need one. Give me a little sincere affection, and my heart will respond."

I thought my words had touched him, for he exclaimed "Ah, Hortense, if you only loved me, you would be perfect. We can still be happy together if you only wish it. I long to be reconciled with you but only on one condition: you must confess to me the wrongs you have committed." I began to smile.

"My goodness," I answered, "if I did not commit any it was not your fault. It was because I enjoyed having a clear conscience."

"I am sure of it," he replied. "Tell me all and I will forgive you." For an entire month he not only wrote me by day, but he also disturbed my slumbers at night, repeating constantly the same thing. He would come in through a little door which opened on my alcove and which I had not dared lock for fear of arousing his suspicions, and wake me up suddenly.

I found myself obliged to listen to all his lamentations. He became more and more despondent; I did not know what to do. I was so worn out and unstrung that I was obliged to ask him to postpone the rest of the discussion till the following day. He would do so and return with more of the same reproaches.

"You have made me the unhappiest man in all the world," he said. "I firmly wish to be reconciled and know the truth. Otherwise we will separate forever. I am writing my brother that I am prepared to give up everything. I cannot live with a person who makes me suffer so. You will end by killing me and have that on your conscience. It is grief that is making me ill. You are destroying my health."

"What am I to do?" I cried, with tears running down my cheeks. "After all your reproaches if I have done wrong, I should admit it. Look at me closely. Truth is something one can see. Do you find in my expression that embarrassment which denotes the criminal?"

Nothing could satisfy him. He adopted another line of conduct and one day came to me in triumph. "You refuse to confess anything. Very well. I tell you I now know all and have proofs of your guilt."

"That cannot be true," I replied firmly and without pausing to weigh my words. "One cannot have proofs of events which never occurred. If I were guilty, your trick might succeed, but it is disgraceful for you to invent such a tale." He remained motionless and did not say a word.

Nevertheless, he kept constantly coming back to the idea that such absolute virtue could not possibly exist. More exhausted than I can say by this constantly renewed persecution, I became like one of those unfortunates who on the rack make a false confession in order to escape further agony. I conceived the idea of making up some story that would put an end to this state of things and cause my husband to leave me alone.

I was only embarrassed as to the name of my accomplice. I could not deliberately inflict my husband's hatred on someone and I wished to choose a person who was no longer alive. Adele was no longer with me. I confided my plan to Madame de Boubers, who for a long time had been a witness of my misfortunes.

She protested against my doing such a thing, and finally made me promise that I would not carry out my plan. At last my husband, worn out by his useless efforts, appeared one day with a peace-treaty which he wished us to sign. He promised that if I did so he would make me happy; if I refused, he would complain of my conduct to the Emperor in the strongest terms. I asked him to leave me this document in order to give me an opportunity to answer each clause separately. Here it is. I have always kept a copy of it.

We, Louis and Hortense, desire to put an end to the state of mental discomfort and constraint in which we both have been living for a long time and we consider that our mutual enmity since our marriage has been due to the fact that we married before we had come to care for each other. Desiring to find a means by which we may hereafter live happily and profit by the experience of the last five

years, we have resolved to observe the resolutions set forth in the present private deed to which we have apposed our signatures. We each of us swear and promise before God to fulfil all the conditions set forth herewith:

Paragraph 1 :—It is agreed that all mistakes, errors and faults of whatever nature they may have been which may have been committed by either of us in the past, and which may have been prejudicial to the other, are hereby annulled, forgiven and canceled ; and it is forbidden to refer in any way to the unhappy past.

Paragraph 2 :—We promise henceforth to cherish one another, not merely because we are husband and wife but of our own free will, and as though we had chosen each other free from any constraint. We promise not to separate under any pretext nor ask to do so. Should such a request be made, the other party shall refuse to accede to it. We shall prefer each other to any or all members of our respective families. Lastly, we shall show both in public and private our mutual love and confidence.

Paragraph 3 :—We promise on our honor not to correspond, I, Louis Bonaparte, with any woman, without the Queen's permission and I, Hortense, with any man, without my husband's permission, and this without any further explanation but out of a spirit of reciprocity.

Paragraph 4 :—We both promise to unite our efforts and to make common cause to keep the guardianship of our children and not allow them to be adopted by the Emperor or the Empress.

Paragraph 5 :—We promise never to disagree in public and to make all our demands on one another when we are alone together.

Paragraph 6 :—We solemnly promise on our honor to receive no visitor and to go nowhere ourselves without having informed the other party in this agreement of the fact. And we further promise, I, Louis, not to receive any woman and I, Hortense, not to receive any man or any woman without my husband's permission.

Paragraph 7 :—We promise that the arrangement of our apartments and the choice of our attendants shall be such as is mutually agreeable and that nothing shall be done until both parties have agreed upon it. We will examine and discuss together the arrangements that already exist.

Paragraph 8 :—We promise to have only one purse, that is to say that Hortense shall have no private funds of her own, and that no correspondence about business matters is to be carried on by the Queen without the King's consent.

By performing and carrying out the above conditions in a loyal and scrupulous manner we hope to live as respectable and honorable people. And in order to confirm our reconciliation we hereby promise solemnly to live entirely for one another and for our two children. - (Signed) Louis.

This is the reply that I wrote in the margin of Louis' contract:

"I cannot sign this agreement because I refuse to deceive you, and it is impossible for me to carry out the points specified in it. "According to the first paragraph I must forget the wrongs that have been done to me. I can do my best to achieve this, but it is not in a single day that one can wipe out so many years of unhappiness.

Moreover, my ability to forget the past depends entirely on your behavior towards me. If you show that you admire and trust me it will be possible for me to care for you again.

"As regards paragraph 2 you have not made me so happy that you can take the place of my entire family. The latter consists of the Emperor, whom I have always considered as my father, the Empress and my brother. I shall take advantage of every opportunity that occurs to be near them.

"As for paragraph 3, how can you expect me to write to my family only when you allow me to do so? As far as other persons are concerned, I agree readily enough.

"Paragraph 4 :—You have the right to appoint and dismiss all the persons who belong to my household. I have never appointed anyone without your approval. But I shall never approve of the dismissal of anyone who has done nothing wrong.

"Paragraph 5 :— My hopes and my happiness consist in having my children with me. But God is master of their fate and it is for Him to decide what that fate shall be.

"Paragraph 6 is easy enough to fulfil.

"Paragraphs 7 and 8 show how little confidence you have in me. It would, however, be easy enough to conform to them, disagreeable as it is to realize that they are prompted by suspicions.

The above indicates my point of view, which is totally different from yours. If all these discussions are painful it is because they lead nowhere and because I have lost all hope of finding a solution. You demand immediately something that only time can give and especially that frankness and confidence which you have never shown me. Nevertheless, you may be sure that whatever may be your behavior toward me my friendship for you will always continue, and that the father of my children can never become indifferent to me.

HORTENSE.

April 16, 1807.

How could the King ask me to make a promise he knew I would not keep? Was it possible for me to declare that I should no longer wish to write to my family, or see my brother if he returned to France? Louis was master of my fate, he could take steps to prevent me from doing these things, but he could not make me consent to his doing so. In spite of this I was forced to submit to all the Emperor's reproaches when he received the letter in which my husband complained that I was making him

miserable.

The King was ill for two days. I did not leave his side for a moment. He must have noticed my spontaneous and zealous care. He seemed to be touched by it, but his first expression of tenderness revealed again a desire to find me at fault. The fact that he was unable to do this seemed to embitter him, and I felt that he was saying to himself: "How I could love you and how happy I would be if only you were guilty". I was extremely discouraged; all hope of happiness had fled. Thinking to make someone else happy I still persisted in my attempts to achieve this purpose. How many times have I stifled a complaint or a sigh in order not to shame the man to whom I had vowed obedience!

I so wanted to make him happy in spite of his natural melancholy. I struggled to modify his nature and I fed my foolish hopes on my incessant and constantly vain efforts. It was as though I considered that I possessed more than human powers. Then too how often, when aroused by the keenness of my pain and fired by my love for what is good, did I exclaim enthusiastically: "I suffer bitterly. What does that matter? I welcome suffering, for it makes one better."

CHAPTER VII

THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE ROYAL TRAVELS IN SOUTHERN FRANCE (MAY-AUGUST 1807)

Illness and Death of the Prince Royal—A Mother's Agony—Change of Scene—The Pyrenees—Lourdes—Pau—Bayonne—Into Spain—Mountain Excursions—Return to Saint Cloud—The Emperor Rebukes Hortense—A Drive with Napoleon and Josephine—The Emperor's Opinion of the Rulers of Prussia and Russia.

ALAS! the moment was at hand when all my energy abandoned me. Not till then did I really know what it was to be unhappy, not yet had I experienced to the full the bitterness of grief, the sharpness of mental anguish.

It was my child, my eldest son who had taught me how deeply I could love, who was to teach me these other lessons. My hand trembles as I tell the story and my tears flow while I write. I was at his bedside with his governess watching him while he slept. His breathing was irregular and oppressed; I could not take my eyes from him. Fear entered my soul. I prayed; I implored. Providence to be just.

"My child must not die," I kept repeating. "What sin have I committed? For what offense am I being punished?"

My conscience reassured me. The foremost doctors in Holland were in attendance. My tears might disturb them, so I tried to be calm, to talk about my son's illness as though he were a stranger.

I felt that had I been in their place I should have found some remedy. Yet not one of them recognized the disease from which he was suffering. It was the croup. In two days, he died.

It was toward me that he turned his pale, wasted little face; it was I whom his lips scarcely able to utter a sound seemed to be calling; it was his mother's name that I saw framed on those discolored lips, and that passed with his last breath.

And I survived all this. How can God allow a mother to outlive her child? Other women, I know, have had sons and have lost them. But they doubtless had their family with them, or some friend, and were comforted and cared for, were relieved of at least a fraction of their despair. I was alone in the world, utterly alone with only my misfortune as companion.

My husband, overcome by his own grief, threw himself at the feet of his son, while I collapsed in so alarming a condition that every effort had to be made to revive me. I had uttered a piercing shriek when I saw that my son was lifeless. I lay in a swoon, as motionless as though I too were dead and yet hearing everything that went on about me.

The phrase, uttered by a doctor, "She gives no sign of life," was perhaps what brought me back to it. The hope of death made me resigned to the prospect of the hereafter. I was completely paralyzed and could not speak a word to those who wept beside my bed. My husband hastened to me, his face streaming with tears. He called my name, implored me to keep on living for his sake and to forgive him

the sorrows and unfair treatment he had inflicted on me.

For the first time in his life he admitted he had done wrong. I remained insensible; no emotion stirred within me. My only thought was the prospect of a speedy death. "I am about to die," I said to myself. The despair of those about me proved this. It gave me a welcome certitude of my approaching end which comforted me and removed some of the weight of despair beneath which I was crushed.

This state lasted several hours. My window was open. The mournful song of the watchmen calling the hours of the night came to my ears. I cannot describe the effect it had on me. I made a movement which betrayed the fact that I was still alive, but how little I cared for that life.

The following day passed, dreary and silent. I could not shed a tear. They brought me the child that was left me. I looked at him, then pushed him away. "I do not want to love anything again on earth."

I felt I was about to die and I waited impatiently for the hour to strike. Religion might have succored me, but at that moment I did not respond to any religious sentiment; all those emotions seemed to have been stifled in my heart.

For what am I being punished? What have I done wrong? Was I not already unhappy enough? I can no longer believe in God, in his kindness or in his justness, but if I die, then my faith in Him will be restored," I exclaimed.

I added a moment later: "I feel He has set a limit for my sufferings. He is about to reunite me to my son. Now may His name be praised!"

I yearned for that moment to come. None of these thoughts changed my physical condition. My body had lost the power to move, my eyes were always dry and with a fixed stare in them, my features unchanging and expressionless. I was no longer in communication with those about me. I showed no apparent sign of being alive, only my inner life still continued.

The doctors recommended that I should travel. I made no objections, for nothing any longer affected me. It had been difficult to make me take any nourishment.

A new novel that had just appeared was read aloud to me. Everything was done to distract my attention, which seemed concentrated unremittingly on a single point. The words uttered near me reached my brain but were unable to distract my mind. I had constantly before my eyes the lifeless body of my son and was unable to shed a tear. Princess Caroline hastened to me from Paris as well as Adele and her sister, the wife of Marshal Ney.

Far from being touched by this token of their affection, I looked at them without saying a word. I knew that they were my friends, but I had ceased to care for anyone. My mother came to the Château of Laeken to which I was taken.

She was overcome with grief at the death of her grandson, yet found courage enough to come and nurse her daughter. In what a state she found me! Much had been hoped from our meeting. It was thought the presence of my beloved mother would produce a beneficial emotion.

On my arrival at the palace of Laeken the Empress in tears rushed forward to meet me. I recognized her perfectly, looked at her, but not a word or sign indicated that I still retained a spark of affection for her.

She had not conceived a condition which no remedy could cure; the sight of me filled her with alarm and grief. Doctor Corvisart declared that only the passage of time and change of scene could improve my health and that drugs would kill me.

His opinion was followed, and I was surprised to hear my husband approve of it. "Is it possible he agrees to something that will do me good? It is the first time he has ever done a thing like that."

If anything could have moved me it would have been this change in Louis' attitude. That was why when he left me to return to Holland, I took his hand and said: "Louis, I feel that I am about to die. I wish to give you the assurance that I forgive you; I die as innocent as the child I have just lost.

Wherever he may be, I shall be by his side. Do not grieve on my account, for I shall be happy." He begged me to take care of myself, not to give way to such sad premonitions, and left the palace. My mother took me out for daily walks to visit the neighboring estates. It did not matter to me where we went; I had no preferences, no will of my own.

Nevertheless, the presence of many people made me feel noticeably ill at ease. One day we were at one of these estates. The owners paid us a thousand compliments, to which I did not reply a single word. Indeed, I felt so annoyed that I took a path that led away from that which the rest of the gathering were following.

Adele looked for me and found me seated on a bench. I had been there about a quarter of an hour when I heard the notes of a hunting horn. They had an extraordinary effect on me. Till then I had constantly felt as though some enormous weight were stifling me my breath came in gasps like that of my poor little child.

I seemed to feel him gasping in my arms, and my own sufferings reminded me constantly of his last moments. Suddenly the sound of the instrument that echoed in the distance entered my very soul. The emotion it roused in me relaxed my nerves, abundant tears flowed down my cheeks, my senses seemed to revive, but at the same time how keen a sorrow pierced my heart. The pain was so intense that I could not bear the shock. My moral paralysis returned, checking once more all my natural faculties, and it was with a feeling of relief that I exclaimed:

"Ah, I am better, I cannot feel anything anymore. I suffered so dreadfully." With these words I relapsed into my previous insensibility. I am convinced that music would have restored my nerves to

their natural state; but who would have thought to prescribe such a remedy?

My brain was extremely clear, not a detail escaped me. I was entirely conscious of my mother's grief I understood how alarmed she was. It was painful for me not to be able to comfort her, but I had not the strength to overcome my apathy. We left for Paris.

As we passed Saint Denis, I was reminded that there lay the remains of my son. My imagination seemed to enjoy all those ideas which would increase my sorrow. I looked at my remaining child. He was pale and delicate; he needed all my care. I was about to leave him and also say farewell to my mother. This separation did not cause me a single pang. My departure took place without my shedding a single tear. I was taken to the Pyrenees. This trip and two spasms of pain similar to the one I had felt on hearing the hunting horn improved my health.

Yet all my thoughts remained turned toward death. I considered it a gift that Heaven owed me and awaited with a pious resignation that instant of release whose advent I had never expected to try to hasten. When we arrived at Bagnères, the beautiful valley of Campan did not please me. It was too cheerful. This enchanting landscape was not in keeping with my state of mind. What I needed was stern and wild scenery in harmony with profound grief.

Therefore, I only stayed a few days at Bagnères. As soon as my arrival became known people from the neighboring towns and peasants from the surrounding country hastened to come and look at me.

This curiosity reminded me of my rank, my sad fate and my recent misfortune. My health became worse. I could not breathe and I remained dumb. Only when I could leave my carriage on the highway and, with Adele, slip away into one of those little valleys which seemed to offer me a refuge from the world and its troubles, only then was I able to forget for a moment where I was and the misfortune that had caused me to travel so far.

Adele used all her influence to recall my reason, to arouse my attention, by showing me how I could do good to others. This was the surest means of touching my heart. Together we visited the hospitals, but there I found the lot of others preferable to my own.

One day a poor woman came to me in tears and begged me to obtain some information regarding her son who was in the army and whom she believed dead. I looked at her with sympathy. I did what she wanted me to, but I exclaimed, "She is happier than I. She at least has some hope." I gave orders that she was to be given all the money we had with us; she seemed so pleased that I sincerely envied her lot and her poverty, since there was something in the world that could console her. In one of my excursions, when I was some distance away from any human habitation, I caught sight of a young man and a young girl coming down the mountainside.

They stopped, and we asked them some questions. I inquired if they were married. "No," replied the young man, looking earnestly at his companion. "I wish we were. She always tells me to come and

see her at the chalet, but will never consent to marry me."

I wished to find out the reason and asked if they loved one another. If it was a question of money that prevented their union, I would undertake to remove this obstacle. I had them take me to see their parents. The young man did so reluctantly. I obliged him to act as interpreter when I spoke to his family, who only spoke the native dialect. My questions seemed to embarrass them all.

They finally declared that the marriage could not take place because the father would not give his consent. Try as I might to discover the reason I could not do so. The young man offered me milk at his cottage.

I heard a child crying as a woman held it in her arms. This sight touched me, and some tears still further relieved my feelings. The young peasant was no longer smiling. His expression had something sad about it. He looked at me with an air that was uncomfortable and sympathetic at the same time.

When I left, I gave him some napoleons which at first, he refused to accept. At the same time, I told him that he still had a chance to make up his mind. I was not leaving the neighborhood till two days later and I would provide the dowry if the marriage took place. The following day while I was out walking with my entire household, Jacques (that was the young peasant's name) came up to me. He was trembling.

"Madame," he said, "I have come to ask your pardon. I deceived you. I am already married. It so often happens that rich city folk come to our mountainside and amuse themselves at our expense that I thought you were like that. I thought you were making fun of us poor country people and I told you a story that was not true.

The child you heard crying and which you saw in its mother's arms is my child. So I could not accept your gifts, but when I saw your tears I understood that you really meant to be kind to us, and I was sorry for what I had done.

To deceive a woman as good as you are must be a sin. I could not sleep all night. This morning I went to the priest. I confessed everything and relieved my conscience. He told me to come and see you and beg your pardon. I hear you are a queen and that you can have me put in prison. That doesn't matter. I feel that I had to tell you the truth."

I was touched by Jacques' frankness. I complimented him on the fact that having done wrong he knew how to make amends. One must always appreciate the rare courage it takes to admit having done wrong. The memory of this little incident has often helped me understand how greatly the pride of fashionable people hampers their force of character. The innocent conscience of this untutored peasant boy had instinctively shown him how to act, as surely as social training or intellectual brilliancy might have done.

I went on to Cauterets, where the mountains, crowding closer together as they increase in height, make the landscape more imposing and at the same time more rugged. I liked the sound of roaring streams dashing continually past my house, for a mind haunted by the thought of death enjoys

the presence of destructive forces. That was why I sought continually to approach nearer to these awful chasms.

I feared to be followed by my equerries or chamberlain, whose presence would have disturbed me, and I would slip away from them. Taking Adele's arm, I would disappear down the most difficult and dangerous pathways. How often did I take delight in visiting those humble cottages, which seemed to me a refuge of happiness. How often too when the lateness of the hour compelled me to hurry back did I pick my way across perilous torrents.

The round, wet trunk of a tree served as my bridge. I had to place my feet crossways, one in front of the other, in order to reach the opposite side. The thunder of the rushing waters as they dashed down into an abyss on whose brink we stood might make us dizzy, but it could not alarm me.

Only when I looked back would I be surprised at my own temerity and at the same time rejoice not to have seen some easy comfortable bridge a little farther up-stream, because the moment of danger had for an instant taken my mind off my affliction.

Who would have believed that a few years later, among other mountains, another expedition far less dangerous could cost me so dearly, and cast over my life the shadow of an eternal sorrow.

The officers belonging to my household were very much worried about my excursions, both on the ground of court etiquette and of my personal health, which, they explained, they were supposed to safeguard. They complained openly about the pains I took to avoid their company and the way I went off alone with Madame de Broc.

I yielded to their wishes and deserved credit for doing so, as whenever I found myself surrounded by people, I felt physically ill at ease. My Dutch equerry had several bad falls because he insisted on following me over paths that were too difficult for him at his age, and I decided to send him back to Holland, for he would have ended by killing himself on these mountain roads. I only kept with me Monsieur de Villeneuve and Monsieur de Boucheporn. I was touched by the letters my husband wrote me. His grief seemed to equal mine. For the first time we understood one another. He was worried about my health and thought it unfortunate that he could find no way to improve it. He did not dare to come to see me, and I was affected by his attitude. He had caused me so much pain that presumably he did not believe he could prove a consolation for me. I wrote him in a friendly manner, for I had sincerely pardoned his past faults. He kept repeating to me that in the last two months he had come to see life from a different angle, that he was anxious to make me happy, that the torments he had suffered previous to our misfortune when we were living side by side were what had made him wish to find me guilty of some fault so as to have the right to ask for a separation, but that now it was I, and I only, who could give him the necessary courage to perform his various duties. In the end I was touched. I believed his statements.

Nevertheless, I replied that as far as happiness was concerned, I was not sure whether I could give him that. As for courage I had none of my own. This was the truth. Impatient at having been left alone for such a long time Louis finally came to the Pyrenees and spent a few days at Cauterets. I was

wholly absorbed by my grief.

My husband wished to be kind and attentive, but all the defects of his nature came to the surface in spite of his efforts. I trembled at the thought of having again to suffer from his behavior, and this terror was the first thing to take my mind off my loss. Another reason for my alarm was the fact that I did not feel strong enough to sacrifice myself to his pleasure.

Adele encouraged me. She tried to persuade me that our common sorrow had altered my husband's character and that I should try again to make him happy. I felt that to do so would take time. For the present I was absorbed in gloomy thoughts and I had not as yet found anything that tempted me back to every-day life. The King realized that I was still too ill to think about anything except the loss we had so recently suffered. He went to another watering-place in the Pyrenees, from which he wrote me frequently.

His only wish was to effect a reconciliation between us. He declared he would be overjoyed if I would consent to such an arrangement. Some days his letters would be affectionate; on other occasions he insisted on two things as being essential to his peace of mind.

One was that after our reconciliation, in order to be an example of all domestic virtues, I should never speak in a familiar manner (*tutoyer*) to my young ladies with whom I had been brought up; the other was that I should never receive anyone in my private apartments.

These conditions amazed me. For one thing, as I have already said, only women waited on me in my own rooms. As for speaking familiarly to my young ladies, it was a habit I had formed at boarding-school and had kept up intentionally in view of my rank, which placed me so far above my companions.

I should have felt I was behaving in an unduly haughty manner if I had changed in any way my attitude toward them. I considered the title of Queen, which had happened to fall to me, entailed only an obligation to do more for others and protect them. Indeed, I made every effort to prove that I had some personal merit of my own, to make people forget my rank and to gain that affection which is generally bestowed only on those whom we consider our equals in every respect.

I was surprised at the importance my husband attached to such a trifle. His attitude seemed to reveal those traits which I already knew only too well, for instance his habit of taking offense at the least thing when he could not find serious cause for alarm. How was it possible to believe I could make him happy in my present state of mind and body, since I had failed to do so in the days when I had all my health and strength. "But I must do my duty to the bitter end," I said to myself.

"I do not want to have anything to blame myself for, and perhaps new sorrows will hasten my death." I had received two letters written by the Emperor while at the front. In them he reproached me for my grief, complained of my silence and spoke of the sorrow my condition caused my mother. His victories and the conference at Tilsit having ended the war he returned to France and pardoned his brother Jerome whom he was about to marry to the Princess of Württemberg.

The idea of going out into society was intensely disagreeable to me, and I decided instead to make a little trip as far as the Spanish border since it was so near. As I enjoyed traveling incognito, in order to be able to do as I pleased, I left Cauterets on horseback in the direction of a distant valley.

My only companions were Madame de Broc, Monsieur de Boucheporn, an elderly man who was governor of the palace, and a mounted servant who carried our provisions. Having visited the delightful valley of Azun, at one end of which is situated a chapel that much to the regret of the peasants had been closed for a long while and which I managed to have reopened in memory of my son, I began my journey toward Spain instead of returning to Cauterets.

My first night was to be spent at Lourdes. On arriving near the town, I made a detour and entered by the Porte de Paris in order that no one might suspect I was coming from Cauterets. While supper was being prepared, I went for a walk with Madame de Broc.

Many of the townspeople were sitting outside their doors. I joined one such group, was offered a chair and found myself taking part in the conversation.

After asking many questions as to where I came from and where I was going, my neighbors began talking of the Queen of Holland, who was taking the waters at Cauterets. They spoke favorably of her, and I was pleased at hearing myself praised by these good folk who thought I was many miles away.

The next morning, I set out for the charming city of Pau. We left all our riding-horses at Lourdes with the exception of mine. This horse was attached to a small cart which we hired and which my courier drove. The bumping of this badly hung vehicle gave me a rather violent pain in my chest. I had my horse saddled and remounted, riding behind the wagonette in which Madame de Broc had remained.

Occasionally I would stop on purpose to lose sight of it. For the first time in my life I thus found myself alone on a highway. What was there to remind me of the fact that I was a queen, a queen with courtiers, a queen whom people envied no doubt and yet who was so unhappy? I forgot all this. For a moment I made myself believe that freed from all the bondage of my station I was traveling as I pleased.

For an instant I felt that I had laid aside the crown and with it my troubles and my sorrows. I breathed the pure, clear air with an intense enjoyment, and when the carriage stopped to wait for me I galloped up to it in order to reassure my traveling companions and beg them not to worry about my safety. Then once more I would remain alone in order to dream of peace and liberty.

A young peasant woman, clad in the becoming costume of the country and riding on a donkey, was taking the same route we were. She and I rode along side by side chatting with one another. She was on her way to market. Her talk was all about matters which seemed important to her. The more ordinary and commonplace these matters were the more I enjoyed hearing about them. I tried to catch her point of view completely.

Our inner sorrows instead of limiting the circle of our sympathies develop them and cause us to take a more active and compassionate interest in what goes on about us. We stopped at the abbey of Betharam, and Adele and I made a sketch of it. We lunched quietly beside the dashing stream. Afterwards I visited the castle of Coarraze, famous as the place where Henry IV spent his childhood.

These excursions took my mind off my troubles. I felt that I was living on another planet. This method of traveling, which was so new to me, caused me to forget for a moment my sorrows. As we neared Pau, I feared that the sight of a woman riding astride might attract too much attention in a provincial town and I was not at all anxious to be recognized by the prefet, the Marquis de Castellane.

The latter was a clever man but lacked tact and would have been extremely vexed at the idea that I was in his department without his having been informed of the fact. His memories of the former days at court made him believe himself still irresistible.

Although far from young he retained the weaknesses and pretentiousness of youth and thought he had also preserved its charms. I had received the prefet at Cauterets. He was delighted with our household. Surrounded by five young ladies, he had displayed all his airs and graces, and imagined himself fascinating when he was merely being ridiculous.

We had only desired to be left alone to avoid attracting attention. Instead, the prefet had made us conspicuous by spending his time in the main streets of his capital specially training a horse for me to ride. He had urged me to visit the surroundings of Pau and intended to accompany me everywhere.

The yacht belonging to the fleet would come for me, but my incognito, he declared, would be respected. In view of the way he behaved this seemed very doubtful, and I determined to make my excursions alone. In order to do so I had to take pains to avoid a wound to his sensibilities, which would have been keen had he learned that I was at Pau.

Consequently, by an excess of precaution my horse was unsaddled and attached to the back of our carriage in which I sat beside my companions. As we entered the city, the first person we caught sight of was the prefet in full regalia on his way to attend a dinner. Fortunately, he did not deign to notice us. Our terror was inexpressible. On arriving at the inn, we asked for a guide to take us through the château of Henry IV. Afterwards, sitting on a bench in the delightful park close to the city, we made a sketch of the building. This lovely landscape, the memories of this monarch whose soul was so noble and generous had combined slightly to dissipate and calm my grief. But on our re-a newspaper.

It contained turn to the inn I picked up an account of the reception of my son's body at Notre Dame I was deeply moved, but at least now I was able to weep. My friend, I may add, was glad to see my tears, the only way in which I could relieve my feelings.

Consequently, she watched me without saying a word for fear of checking their beneficent flow. That evening the prefet, having learned in some manner which I cannot explain that I was in the city, called, deeply grieved at not having been notified in advance, and wished me to lay aside my incognito.

I had the greatest difficulty to make him grasp that what I wanted was to be left alone. I did not tell him the purpose of my trip or even my actual destination. He believed I was returning the next morning to Cauterets, instead of which I continued on to Bayonne.

My luggage consisted of three bags and saddles piled into a hired carriage. At the inn our reception was by no means a warm one. The best suite was reserved for a Spanish general, and the accommodations offered us were extremely second-rate. Presumably they were quite good enough for people arriving in such a shabby vehicle. The worse my reception the better I was pleased, and I was delighted with what would have annoyed anybody else.

When I stopped to think of the unconventional manner in which I was behaving I dreaded the Emperor's reproaches if he heard about my trip, for a family agreement forbade us leaving France without his permission, and I intended to go on and see a Spanish city. It was the need of occupying my thoughts and escaping introspection that caused me to violate this agreement.

I was so happy when, alone with Adele, whose arm I always took, and followed only by Monsieur de Bouchepon I walked along a street without anyone turning to stare at me, or when, during my walks, for the first time in my life I found myself jostled by the crowd. I forgot who I was, I forgot my torments and my misfortunes; and I left for Spain in an old-fashioned carriage that might have dated from the days of the Goths. It was drawn by six mules.

At Irun I was astonished to note the difference that existed between the two countries which lie side by side. Their frontiers are more clearly defined by the customs of the inhabitants than by the Bidassoa River. I had never seen a priest wearing his robes walk about in the streets. In Spain the entire population seemed to live as though they were inside a monastery. I hired riding-horses at Irun and made my way by bridle-paths to the port of Passajes, one of the most beautiful sites in the world. Everywhere I went I made sketches, everywhere I visited the churches. In one chapel I caught sight of a woman prostrating herself with the greatest abandon. I could not yet understand this perpetual adoration of the Divinity or even this need of communicating with Him by vague prayers having no particular object.

Such complete humility seemed to me to be a sign of remorse. I looked at the woman with sympathy and pity. "She must have committed some great sin," I said to Adele. "Poor woman, she is more to be pitied than I."

Another time I saw an old crone who looked so wretchedly poor I was convinced she must be asking God to bestow alms on her. I gave her money and felt that my surmise was correct when, instead of thanking me, she again fell on her knees praising God for having answered her prayer.

Certain now that I had interpreted her supplications correctly, I gave all the money I had with me and in doing so experienced once more a feeling of true contentment. I went to visit a monastery of Capuchin monks, believing that we should be admitted. They all came to examine us, but we were not

allowed to cross the threshold.

I was no more fortunate when we stopped at the nunnery of a very severe religious order. In spite of our riding-habits they all asked us if we were not French nuns whom the Revolution had driven from our own country.

Probably this was because it was difficult for them otherwise to understand the interest we displayed, which must have seemed extraordinary. At San Sebastian I visited all the points of interest. I climbed up to the fort, from which one has a view of the two greatest beauties of nature, the sea and the hills. I had expected to return the same day to Bayonne, but the tide which leaves the port of Passajes nearly dry pre-vented me from doing so, and I was obliged to spend the night at San Sebastian. I was terrified at the idea that I might be recognized. Suddenly, martial music was heard, and a crowd appeared, accompanying a number of people bearing transparencies. My terror increased. I was already prepared to deny my name and rank.

Fortunately, the procession moved on. It was the evening parade of a regiment stationed in the town, and a ceremony always carried out with much pomp. The next day in spite of the fact that it was raining I remounted my horse and returned by the road along which I had come. Hardly had my departure taken place when a messenger brought the news of my visit and an order to receive me with the proper ceremony. I escaped all this fuss by scarcely an hour and was delighted to have done so.

We continued our journey accompanied only by the men from whom we had hired the horses at Irun. As we were entering a wood one of these men, speaking in rather bad French, indicated a bridge from which a few days before the robbers who infested the region had thrown the body of a traveler whom they had murdered. "Did this take place at night?"

I inquired. "No, indeed, in broad daylight," he replied. "Brigands are so numerous that the authorities are obliged to employ regiments of the regular army against them. Even that does not prevent many murders being committed."

Hearing this I understood for the first time how imprudent I had been in undertaking this trip. Monsieur de Bouchepon, who had not dared to oppose my wishes in the matter, considered himself responsible for my safety, and he was so much worried that he had not said a word since we started.

I looked at him. He was pale and seemed as suspicious of the men who accompanied us as of the robbers of whom they spoke. It is true that the looks of our companions were far from reassuring and that the money they saw us constantly distributing to the poor might have suggested to them the idea of robbing us. I silently glanced at this lonely wood, at these sinister faces. I allowed my horse to go as he pleased.

Suddenly he took it into his head to pick a quarrel with the steed of one of the mule-drivers. The two animals reared and plunged, and my steed threw me to the ground. I felt myself in a dangerous position. Fortunately, I let go the bridle of my horse, or I should have pulled him down on me.

Madame de Broc and Monsieur de Boucheporn were alarmed. I hastened to assure them I was not hurt or shaken. The only thing that worried me was their terror. I remounted my "fiery charger" and arrived at Fuenterrabia, where I made some more sketches and again found my large wagon drawn by mules, which took me back at an incredible speed to Bayonne. I noticed that at the inn my reception was a more cordial one. The Spanish general who had betrayed my incognito at San Sebastian was waiting on the stairway to see me pass. The innkeeper presented himself and apologized for having offered us such poor accommodations before.

I saw there was nothing to be done but to leave. The linen we had left behind when going to take a bath was marked with an H and a crown. This in itself was enough to disclose our secret. Monsieur de Castellane, who continued to dog our footsteps, had sent his secretary as far as Bayonne to find out whether it were possible that I could continue to get along without his services. In this way he had betrayed my identity. When I returned by way of Pau, I made it plain to the prefect how greatly his behavior had displeased me. I was aware of the honors due my rank, but, as I told him, I had hoped he would have sufficient good taste to overlook them in accordance with my wishes.

However, on account of his vanity and the fact that he had boasted so much about receiving me at his house and accompanying me wherever I went, he was vexed at having been put in the wrong. He tried awkwardly to excuse himself but continued to dislike me for, as he put it, having placed him in an awkward position.

The prefect of Tarbes, who had not attended the former royal court as Monsieur de Castellane had done, was far more discreet and I was thoroughly satisfied with the way in which he treated me. My husband was waiting for me at Toulouse to take me back with him to Paris. I was enjoying my informal excursion so much that I asked him to go on ahead and allow me to remain a little while longer in my dear mountains. I would meet him again in Paris. While waiting for his reply I wished to visit the waterfall at Gavarnie and the springs at Bareges.

Hearing I was about to leave, the two prefets appeared. Monsieur de Castellane brought me the horse he had had specially trained for my use. The Saint-Simon family also wished to accompany me. I did not like the idea of admiring the beauties of nature surrounded by all these people. Not wishing to offend anyone I sent all my household to accompany them along the usual road and promised to meet them at the waterfall.

I myself left at three o'clock in the morning with Madame de Broc, Monsieur Thienon, a painter attached to my husband's household, a guide who declared he could show us the way over the pass as he had crossed it when hunting bear, izard or chamois, and eight or ten men who though born in the neighborhood had never yet made such a climb. We crossed the Vignemale glaciers. The difficulties proved greater than I had expected.

Imagine inaccessible rocks, a mountainside so precipitous as to take your breath away at every step. Nowhere was there the least sign of vegetation, nowhere an indication that a human foot had before trod the soil on which you were standing. Eternal masses of ice gleamed at the bottom of crevasses which yawned on every hand. After so much effort the view from the top of the peak is not

worth one's labor. All one sees is thousands of other peaks, the Breche de Roland and the Cirque de Gavarnie far beneath you.

The only satisfaction to one's pride is the thought that not everyone could have made the climb. I was astonished at having undertaken so arduous a task simply to escape the companionship and conventional chatter of two prefets.

On our way down we slid along with our crampons over the ice, but felt it often crack under our weight. The torrent lay beneath us. It was necessary to leave this icy valley and return by way of another in which we were frequently obliged to employ ropes to pull ourselves up over the rocks. Our guides called to each other as soon as one of them had discovered a possible passageway.

I stopped a moment and said to Adele, "Does it not seem as though we were breaking out of some dreadful prison and escaping at the risk of our lives?" She agreed but appeared so exhausted that I felt alarmed. At the same time, I caught sight of the painter whom I had taken along, thinking he would enjoy the beauties of nature.

He was in a truly pitiable condition and obliged to lean for support on two of our mountaineers. Fatigue and discouragement were stamped on his countenance. "Madame," he said, "rather than undertake again this trip I should prefer to be shot on the spot." As for me, my nervous energy was simply incredible, but many worries physical and mental were in the near future to destroy a health which had seemed unalterable.

The moment we again caught sight of green vegetation was an instant of real rejoicing. We arrived at six o'clock

in the evening at the inn 9 at Gavarnie. The painter went to bed. I made two or three more sketches, and in the evening walked about in the little village, and stopped to watch a man who was preparing a display of fire-works to be held in my honor. I was delighted to have escaped these so-called "festivities," and my pleasure in having done so rewarded me for the fatigue I had undergone.

The following day I admired, still without any escort, the waterfall at Gavarnie, situated in the midst of an admirable natural amphitheater. I left the spot when the rest of the party arrived, but decided to wait for them before having supper at Saint-Sauveur. Although as usual the presence of a number of people made me feel unwell, I overcame my faintness. After laying the cornerstone of the bridge across the Gave which still bears my name, I went the next day from Saint-Sauveur again to Cauterets across the mountain. I left at day-break with Madame de Broc while all the officials were still asleep, a crime for which doubtless they never forgave me.

They were not altogether wrong. One should bear the inconvenience of one's station in life. But perhaps my need for quiet and solitude was a sufficient excuse for my conduct. On arriving at Cauterets I received word that my husband would not return to Paris without me and that he was expecting me at Toulouse as soon as possible. I left these Pyrenees, which I had come to love both on account of the sorrow I had suffered there and the solace that nature had offered me.

From a farm which had been named after me I caught a glimpse between two rocks of the vast plain, which represented to me the outer world. I congratulated myself on having been able to escape from it, and felt that in these high altitudes I had been able to come closer to God and to that child whose loss I mourned. Nevertheless, I was obliged to reenter that outer world. My fate would not allow me to do otherwise.

I accepted that fate, but not without regret. How little was I yet able to resign myself to what had to be! My husband insisted upon a reconciliation. I could no longer refuse, but I dreaded all the pain, which I lacked the strength to endure. As encouragement I kept repeating over and over to myself: "In order to die sooner I must suffer even more. At any rate I shall have performed my duties to the end."

I could not succeed in concealing from my husband a sort of fear and even a physical repulsion I felt at our reunion. He desired it so ardently and seemed so pleased that our reconciliation took place at Toulouse.

We traveled back to Paris by very short stages through southern France. Our only companions were Madame de Broc and Monsieur Lasserre, our physician. We maintained the strictest incognito, this allowing us to see all the points of interest in the different towns through which we passed.

At Montpellier, where I happened to be on Sunday, I was amazed to see a crowd of young men, wearing white robes and hoods, going in and out of the church without any appearance of reverence or even ordinary restraint in their manner. I was placed in a quiet corner of the building with Madame de Broc.

The young men noticed our presence, and all eyes were fixed on us with so much attention that we felt embarrassed and rather scandalized, especially by the thought that priests could so forget their sacred mission. Later that evening the archbishop told me all these young men were laymen, members of a brotherhood of White Penitents, who paid so much attention to the pomp of their own services that those of the main church suffered.

Hearing this I was no longer so surprised at the indiscreet way in which we had been examined, but found it curious that these young men should have chosen this particular form of amusement. I visited the College of Soreze and the pool of Saint-Ferreol where two streams flow in different directions and form that Canal du Midi which unites the two seas.

At Nimes I admired in detail some architectural remnants of the Roman occupation. At Avignon I was shown the spot on which so many atrocities were committed during the Revolution. Here was a new reason to be grateful to the Emperor for having put an end to so much civil turmoil.

I wished to see the fountain of Vaucluse. While my husband amused himself composing verses and carving them on trees which bordered the stream, I approached close to its not very impressive abyss and was seized with some inexpressible terror when I drank the waters.

Was it because this fountain had witnessed the ecstasies and inspired the lyricism of an especially sensitive soul? Was it some memory of those fabled fountains which possessed the power of troubling even the most unblemished mind? I cannot tell the cause, I can only describe what I felt.

In those spots where others have loved ardently one's heart is conscious of its capacity to experience passion and fears it all the more keenly. Mine, when I penetrated beneath its surface, showed me that there was still much to be done before I really destroyed what I flattered myself had been crushed long ago. Leaving the lonely shades of Vaucluse, which after the Pyrenees are not remarkable except as they recall the memories of Laura and Petrarch, we arrived in a little town in which the inhabitants recognized us.

The crowd unhitched our horses and dragged us through the streets with all that enthusiasm which is characteristic of southern races. Who would have dared predict that in that same country, so enthusiastic towards the Empire, only a few years later a Marshal of France would be assassinated and the life of the Emperor be in danger? That is what the favor of the mob amounts to, and yet it is the crowd that knows best how to acclaim its favorites. Fortunately, the ovation of which we were the object did not last long. Nevertheless, it was almost necessary to use force in order to regain our freedom. Farther along the route we passed unrecognized.

But at every town where I remembered that one of my former school-mates was living I had her informed of my presence and felt delighted at this opportunity of catching a glimpse of my old friends. We had only gone as far as Lyons, and already I felt I could scarcely continue to endure the fatigue. It was in August. The heat exhausted me extremely, and my husband's indifference to my comfort proved that there was not much improvement to be hoped for on my return home.

The love he declared he felt for me did not seem compatible with his lack of attention. Consequently, instead of gaining courage, I felt it ebbing from me more and more. One day our carriage broke down, and we were nearly hurled over a precipice. I remained inside without becoming excited and exclaimed, "Ah, at last the moment has arrived." But nothing happened and we escaped this peril.

On another occasion we were over-taken by a terrific storm. The lightning was so violent and so continuous that we feared it might blind us. We were in the very heart of the storm. I thought how welcome death would be and awaited in joyful anticipation the bolt that would bring me that blessing.

How unhappy one must be, and how utterly wretched one must feel, to arrive at such a state of self-abandonment, opposed to all the laws of nature! But soon I was to experience vastly different emotions. We arrived at Saint Cloud after nightfall. The court was attending a theatrical performance. My mother left it in order to come and greet me. My son was brought to me fast asleep. I pressed him to my bosom, and the feeling I had on being again among these beings who were so dear to me showed me I had recovered all my capacity for emotion.

I wept bitter tears when the Emperor entered the room. "Ah, there you are!" he exclaimed joyfully. After embracing me he noticed my tears. "What's the meaning of this? You must stop behaving so childishly. You have cried long enough over your son. Do you want to be like a 'Nina' of maternal

devotion? You are not the only woman who has suffered such a loss, but other mothers are braver than you are. Especially when they still have children to love and when they, like you, have duties to perform. Your child needs you, your kingdom is begging you to return and you are saddening your mother's heart. I admit that I have not found you as brave as I expected you would be. What an idea to go off mountain-climbing instead of remaining with your mother and your son! You have been unjust to them in seeking elsewhere consolation for your grief. If I had been here, I would not have tolerated such behavior. But now you are back, smile, be gay, indulge in the amusements of youth, and don't let me see a single tear."

He left the room after having delivered this lecture, not guessing for an instant how deeply his words had wounded me. It was true that the flow of my tears ceased, but in their place came a feeling a thousand times more painful. "Can this be what people call the kindness of the Emperor?" I said to my mother. "I thought of him as being more considerate. It is easy to see he does not know in the least what maternal affection is. Heavens, how can he reproach me for weeping? I scarcely cried at all and if he does not understand my very natural emotion in finding myself once more in the midst of you all, it must be because his heart is shut to all natural human feelings. Is it possible that he does not understand them at all? I admit the sight of my sorrow may displease him. Therefore, I do not seek to remain here. Let me go away."

My mother sought to quiet me. "You do not understand the Emperor's nature," she said. "He believes you increase your grief by giving way to it unrestrainedly.

He had told me in advance that he would speak severely to you because he considered that was the only way you could be cured. But you may be sure he shares your sorrow. He speaks of it very often to me, and his cold attitude toward you was prompted solely by his interest in your welfare."

My mother succeeded in diminishing slightly the effect the Emperor's words had produced. But for a long time afterwards I felt a terror and general sensation of discomfort come over me every time he entered a drawing-room in which I happened to be.

I could not bring myself to speak to him, and yet I must admit he showed himself most considerate toward me. When the time came for his daily drive, on which only my mother accompanied him, he would invite me to go with them and would speak on topics which he knew interested me, such as, for instance, the establishment of the girls' school at Ecouen [for the daughters of the officers of the Legion of Honor], which was to be directed by Madame Campan. He appointed me in advance the guardian princess of this institution and went into the details of his plans in connection with it—a thing he rarely or never did.

Another time the Emperor described his interview with the Emperor Alexander at Tilsit. "He is a charming young man," he would always say at the end, "and I like him very much. As for the Queen of Prussia she is handsome, pleasant in manner but rather affected, and," he added, turning towards my mother and giving her a kiss, "she does not compare with my Josephine."

The Empress, who was aware of his efforts to amuse me, asked him questions in order to make him keep up the conversation. She often asked him what the King of Prussia was like. He gave a detailed and rather favorable portrait of this monarch. "As far as his tact is concerned," he went on, "what do you think of a prince who tells me when I have just annexed the province of Silesia from him, the well-known anecdote of how Frederick the Great wished to take his battledore away from him when he was a child and he refused obstinately to give it up, causing his uncle to remark, 'At least I am glad to see that no one will ever make you give up Silesia'?

"To be sure the King was in an awkward position," the Emperor continued, "and therefore he should have been particularly careful and dignified in his behavior. One day I was tracing out on a map spread in front of me how the territory was to be divided. Whenever he felt that Prussia was not receiving her due deserts he would tip back in his chair and kick the bottom of the table saying, 'How about me? Is anything at all going to be left over for me?'

He also displayed a little too clearly his jealousy regarding the Emperor Alexander's attentions to the Queen. I once went riding with the two rulers.

Alexander had gone on ahead to catch up with the Queen. The King of Prussia was unable to conceal his uneasiness. He kept glancing about in all directions and exclaimed, 'Where can the Emperor of Russia be? He seems to have lost us.' While I, in a brotherly spirit, replied that he had been there a moment before and that he could not be far away."

In speaking of the Queen of Prussia the Emperor acknowledged her beauty, but he had not approved of her attitude as ruler of a country whose territories had been invaded. He considered that she made too great an effort to be agreeable, that she paid too much attention to her personal appearance, an attitude which revealed a lack of good taste.

He claimed that under similar distressing circumstances a French princess would have been well gowned but without any show of ostentation. As for the King of Saxony the Emperor considered him the best and most virtuous of men.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE AT THE EMPEROR'S COURT--THE BIRTH OF NAPOLEON III (SEPTEMBER, 1807-MARCH, 1808)

At the Saint Cloud Fair—A Startling Talk with Napoleon—Fouché Suggests a Divorce to Josephine—The Marriage of the Duc d'Arenberg—The Surgeon of King Louis—Birth of Charles Louis Napoleon—Monsieur de Talleyrand Comes to Call—Caroline's Confession—Josephine's Debts—The Emperor of Russia—Hortense and Her Talismans—Her Intervention on Behalf of Talleyrand—Madame de Metternich—General Durosnel.

SOON after my return to Saint Cloud I realized I was about to have another child. I resolutely cast aside all the gloomy thoughts which I had cherished so long, considering that my life no longer belonged to me alone and that it was my sacred duty to preserve it.

Another duty served to stimulate my energy. I had again undertaken the task of leaving no stone unturned in my efforts to assure the happiness of my husband, that being who seemed to shun deliberately everything that might restore his peace of mind.

I shared my mother's apartment; the King's rooms were on the lower floor. He seemed annoyed about this and I decided to move down beside him. Louis was bored at Saint Cloud and wished us to stay in Paris. In order to follow him there I was forced to leave my mother and my son. Furthermore, I was obliged to conquer my grief at being surrounded by objects which recalled the loss I had sustained.

Unappreciative of what I was doing for him, my husband remained cold and self-centered, rewarding my efforts to please him neither by word nor glance. While we had been on our journey our physician had urged him either to advance or post-pone the date of our return to Paris for fear that the moment of our arrival there might not be favorable to my health. Nothing could change Louis' plans. The carriage in which we drove daily from Paris to Saint Cloud where we dined came from the imperial stables and was very uncomfortable, so much so indeed that I was one day so badly jolted as to become ill and be in danger of a miscarriage.

I spoke to the King about it, asking him to allow me to stay that night at Saint Cloud as I felt really unwell. "You know that this would inconvenience me," he replied shortly. This reply crushed me. It was so cruel that I felt it gave me the right to consider myself freed from one set of duties and in a position to give myself wholly to other obligations.

As a crowning piece of misery the King wished to return to Holland and take me with him. In vain my medical adviser declared that the injuries my long and frequent journeys had inflicted on me made such a trip entirely impossible for at least another four and a half months.

My husband pretended not to understand these reasons, told me that I was a better judge of what was good for me than my physician and that I should be all right in two weeks. He repeated this statement until the moment of his departure, saying, "I shall expect you in two weeks."

How could he be so inhuman toward his wife when he was kind enough to other people? During our last trip I had seen him sympathize with the illness of the son of a poor peasant, have the sick boy cared for by his own doctor, and delay our departure in order to look after this utter stranger.

Before we were married, he frequently went without his private carriage in order to lend it to a young boy who was in poor health. It seemed as though I were the only being for whom he reserved all his harshness. And yet that was what he called love.

Is it surprising that this word has always filled me with terror? Madame de Broc left me in order to rejoin her husband who wished her company. All her personal feelings made her desire my return to Holland yet, eager as she had been for a reconciliation to take place between me and my husband, she was equally convinced now that all hope for our future happiness together must be given up. As she loved me she could not see why, after I had attempted to achieve the impossible,

I should submit to this new sacrifice. Consequently, she entreated me to remain in Paris for my confinement. "I will conceal nothing from you," she said; "I promise to tell you the truth about the King. If I again discover any traces of that suspiciousness, that malevolence toward you, which you are unable to stand any longer, if I hear him make any more of those statements which sully your reputation, I will not hesitate to advise you not to return to him.

Your life is necessary to your children and to your friends, and those with whom you come in contact will know how to judge your conduct."

"My dear Adele," I replied, "my life in Holland was such that if I return there it will be only as a means of putting an end to my existence. I feel that at the present time my life belongs to someone else, and I must care for my health in order that he may live. If I survive my confinement—and I do not believe I shall do so—you will see me again in Holland. I care too little about what becomes of me to have the will to resist the forces that urge me thither. My fate lies there. I will return, come what may."

Adele's departure saddened me. I had nevertheless consented to her going away. She would be happy in the company of her worthy husband. It had been agreed we should write one another when the opportunity occurred and place the letters in hat-boxes or other packages, as we were convinced that otherwise our correspondence would be opened and read.

After my husband had left for Holland, I remained at Saint Cloud. One day after dinner the Emperor said to me: "Go and put on your simplest gown and hat. Take your lady in waiting with you, and we shall pay a visit to the Saint Cloud fair."

The Empress had a headache and did not care to accompany us. I hastened back quickly to the drawing-room, but my Dutch lady in waiting took so long to change her dress that the Emperor grew tired of waiting for her, and we set out alone on foot.

The Emperor gave me his arm. The aide-de-camp General Bertrand, who happened to be on duty, walked beside us. We soon reached the main alley of the park which formed the center of the fair.

We kept some distance from the different booths in order not to be recognized, for whenever a crowd caught sight of the Emperor he would be surrounded amid cheers.

This obliged him to hurry back to the palace. Often, we saw him returning from a little walk almost carried shoulder-high by a mob and swearing that he would never be caught again.

On this particular occasion as he had a lady with him no one paid any attention to him. Moreover, night was coming on. The throng pushed its way toward the gates. We mean-while continued to look at the sights of the fair.

The voiture nomade caught our eye, and being out to see the sights we took the opportunity to investigate it. While General Bertrand was paying for our admission the Emperor began talking to the showman regarding the usefulness of his machine and embarrassed him greatly by the directness of some of his questions.

When we came out the crowd jostled us so violently that the Emperor was worried about me. He hastened to drag me into the first show-booth we came across. It happened to be a tent containing an exhibition of wax figures representing the signing of the Peace-Treaty at Tilsit.

Around a large table were seated figures representing the Emperor of Russia and Emperor Napoleon. In addition to these, and for what reason I cannot tell, there had been added figures of the entire imperial family, which had probably been used on other occasions, while the Sleeping Beauty reclined in one corner. There was hardly anyone present to admire all these masterpieces; nevertheless, the showman delivered his usual lecture, and we heard ourselves described one after the other.

We were about to leave when we noticed that General Bertrand had not come into the tent with us. The crowd had separated us from him, and as neither the Emperor nor I ever had any money with us we both were much embarrassed.

The situation struck me as so odd and amusing that I could not restrain my mirth, and my amusement increased the Emperor's embarrassed manner. The more uncomfortable he looked the more I wanted to laugh.

There was nothing to be done but wait patiently for General Bertrand to find us. In order to pass the time, we examined rather more closely the waxworks. I questioned the man in charge about each of the different portraits.

He assured us they were all excellent resemblances and particularly praised that of the Queen of Holland, which seemed to have a particular attraction for me. It was true the complexion was delicately colored and the face quite charming. Indeed, I must confess that he had given my name to the most attractive of his wax figures.

Nevertheless, the way her hair was done showed such a lack of taste that I felt rather ashamed. I ventured to advise the showman to change the position of a string of pearls that fell over one eye and

gave her a far from refined expression.

As a result of my comments he set about adjusting her coiffure according to my indications, and did so with such gravity that the Emperor was not able to keep serious over what he called a piece of feminine vanity on my part. Even the showman himself began to laugh. But it was time for our fun to cease as the Emperor began to be rather impatient.

If General Bertrand did not put in an appearance it was evident that we should be obliged to reveal our identity in order to escape from our predicament. Before doing so, however, I had the idea of standing by the door where the General could see me from a distance.

I was less likely to be recognized than the Emperor. The General finally did catch sight of me. He had been looking for us anxiously everywhere. He hurried up, all out of breath, and allowed us to make our escape. We hastened to return home and amused the Empress greatly by our account of our adventures. Such moments of merriment, however, were rare indeed, and I had still difficulty in escaping my worries and fortifying my health, which continued to decline. The court moved to Fontainebleau.

I was obliged to make the trip by water because of my extreme weakness. This had been increased by the fact that at a ball, given by the Grand Duchess of Berg in honor of the marriage of Prince Jerome, the Emperor in spite of my protests, which he blamed on my state of depression, had forced me to dance.

The court's stay at Fontainebleau was enlivened by all sorts of amusements. In the morning there would be elaborate hunting expeditions in the forest or lectures on physics by the famous Professor Charles. In the evening there would be either a play, concert or dance in the apartment of the Empress or in those of the princesses.

I was excused from taking part in the hunting parties and occasionally would go and paint in the forest near the palace. In the evening I held a reception or I went to my mother's apartment. Many foreign princes visited the imperial court.

Those I saw the most frequently were the Prince of Baden, the Prince of Coburg and the Prince of Mecklenburg. One of the last-named interested me particularly because he had just lost his wife, sister of the Emperor of Russia, and was overcome with grief. As I rarely went out and was obliged to remain more and more on my chaise longue everyone was kind enough to come and take tea with me and bring me the latest news of what was going on. My husband wrote rarely. He accused me of not having kept my word because two weeks after his departure from Paris I had not appeared in Holland.

Consequently, he no longer spoke of my return but demanded that his son be sent to him. The child was extremely delicate, and the doctors declared that the Dutch climate would not agree with him. This was a cause of new worries and anxieties for me. To send him to a place where his health would be in danger was a terrible idea.

I explained all my reasons to my husband; I forwarded all the reports of the physicians; but he had made up his mind to have what he wanted and I felt that in the end I should be obliged to give in.

The kingdom of Westphalia had just been created, and Jerome with his wife went to Cassel, the new capital. The Princess of Baden returned to her husband at Mannheim., and the Grand Duchess of Berg and I were left alone in the midst of a still brilliant court. The petty annoyances and vexations of every-day life exist at court as they do elsewhere, and are still more disagreeable there on account of the stately and solemn setting.

The glorious Peace of Tilsit had restored order and general happiness. All hopes seemed to have been realized, all wishes fulfilled.

Nevertheless, those on whom the Emperor had conferred power and wealth were uneasy. They scrutinized the future and were alarmed at the apparent lack of stability of the regime. For the first time the topic of a divorce between the Emperor and his wife was openly discussed.

The Emperor, it is true, had not said a single word in regard to it as yet, a fact which caused the friends of the Empress to consider such remarks as were made to be due merely to the hostility of certain individuals. Having been asked by my husband to present some special petition to his brother I requested and was granted an audience.

It was at a time when the King was sending back from Holland many Frenchmen belonging to his body-guard.

The Emperor was annoyed and displeased with him. He showed this plainly by the way in which he received me. I attempted to soothe him as I usually succeeded in doing.

I begged him to allow Frenchmen to wear the Order of Holland (which Louis had recently created) and thus recognize the existence of this order. The Emperor declared that as far as he was concerned, he would never wear it, for the King had instituted it at a time when he had asked him not to do so.

A few days later he granted one of the ministers, Mollien, permission to wear this decoration. I also spoke about my husband's wish to have his son with him in Holland and the doctors' fears as to the effects of the climate on the child's health, owing to his frail constitution.

This was the Emperor's answer "A father asks that his son join him. The child is not yet seven years old and I cannot prevent his departure. He is the only boy in the family. If he returns to Holland he will die as his older brother did, and the entire French nation will oblige me to obtain a divorce. People have no confidence in my brothers, who, moreover, are all self-seeking and ambitious. Eugene does not bear my name, and in spite of my efforts to restore peace my reign will be followed by complete anarchy. Only by having a son to succeed me can matters be arranged. If I have not yet secured a divorce the only thing that has restrained me has been my affection for your mother, for all France is anxious to have me do so. This was obvious at the moment of your son's death. Everyone believed that I

was his father. You know how absurd such an idea is. Yet it was impossible to prevent all of Europe thinking the child was my son."

He stopped a moment, noticing my surprise, and then went on: "The public did not think the worse of you on that account; you are generally considered to be moral in your conduct, yet everyone thought this was true."

After a pause he continued "It was perhaps just as well to have people think so. I considered his death to have been a great misfortune."

I was so overcome that, as I stood beside the fireplace, I was not able to utter a word. The remark, "It was perhaps just as well that people should think so," seemed to tear a veil from my eyes. It caused a turmoil in my brain and struck deep into my heart, wounding me more than all the rest of the Emperor's words.

Was it possible that while he had been treating me as his daughter, while I had been glad and grateful to look upon him as a father who took the place of the one I had lost, all these attentions, this solicitude was the result of deliberate planning and not of spontaneous affection? The thing that is dearest to a woman, her reputation, had in this instance been sacrificed for reasons of State, instead of being protected by the man who should have been the first to do so.

Those marks of affection which the Emperor had bestowed on me, and which I considered both precious and gratifying, furnished additional proof of my shame in the eyes of the world. The Emperor had been able to conceive the idea that I might be guilty.

His compliments, instead of being, as I had considered them, sincere tokens of his esteem, had doubtless been empty phrases prompted by political motives. Instead of being my friends the people about me were perhaps merely courtiers seeking the favor of the mother of the Emperor's heir.

I had perhaps been simply an instrument by which ambitious persons had hoped to gain their ends. Ah, how dreadful it is to have one's illusions shattered so rudely! Yet I admit this first movement of indignation passed off quickly. Evil that comes from without, and of which we do not cherish the secret sting within our own bosoms, strikes us but is powerless to inflict deep wounds.

My heart was pure, and I knew that truth is not to be found at the courts of monarchs, that where ambition holds the center of the stage one cannot expect to find either sincerity or rectitude. Only I could not help feeling sorry for my lot.

Since then I have thought over this conversation with the Emperor and, having grown more familiar with his character, I have come to believe that the words I treated so seriously were uttered merely as a passing phrase.

I am convinced that he never could have credited a gossip which cast an unpleasant light on my character. He had enough enemies who sought to slander him in every way without himself offering

them additional material. The verses printed in reply to an English newspaper attack which I had asked Bourrienne to explain to me shortly after my marriage were proof enough that he did not wish any discreditable reports about my conduct to be put in circulation.

At the moment, however, I did not reason so clearly, and for a long time I felt a repulsion toward the Emperor on account of what he had said. His mention of a divorce had also struck me, and I was therefore less astonished than I should otherwise have been when later my mother told me of an interview she had had with the Chief of Police, Fouché.

Fouché had come to her and said that all France wished the Emperor to obtain a divorce, that so far he had not considered it, but that in the end he would be obliged to yield to public opinion.

Fouché even went so far as to show my mother the rough draft of a letter he advised her to write the Senate, and suggested it would be best if she were to be the one to take the first steps in the matter of securing this separation.

Previously a divorce had seemed to me to be entirely out of the question, but my conversation with the Emperor caused me to fear that he was already acquainted with Fouché's proposals. The Empress could not make up her mind what to do, and I did not dare advise her in regard to so delicate a matter.

Yet when she obliged me to express an opinion all I told her was that if I were in her place I should go to the Emperor, reproach him for treating me in this underhanded manner, and ask him to formulate his wishes clearly.

If he showed that he wished a divorce, I would not stay with him another instant. At the same time I took care to advise my mother to act as she thought best, for her affection for the Emperor might cause her to differ from my point of view.

As a matter of fact, having discussed the matter at length with her various ladies in waiting and especially with Madame de Remusat, the friend of Monsieur de Talleyrand, in whose judgment she had special confidence, the Empress decided to reply to Fouché that she would not take any action to defend herself.

She did not speak to the Emperor either, but he shortly afterwards was informed of the advice Fouché had given the Empress. He reproached my mother for having kept silent and assured her that Fouché had acted on his own initiative and not on the Emperor's behalf. Nevertheless, he questioned the Empress as to what she thought about the matter.

She replied that she would never take the first steps to bring about a change which would separate her from him. She said she considered their destiny had been so extraordinary that it had certainly been directed by Providence, and she believed she would bring misfortune on both of them if, of her own accord, she sought to separate their two lives.

The Emperor showed that he was touched, adopted the same affectionate attitude toward her as in the past, and the project seemed to have been entirely put aside. Yet the incident had aroused apprehension in my mother's heart. The talk going about Paris in regard to a possible divorce was being repeated to her all the time, and it so greatly disturbed her peace of mind that I frequently wondered whether in the end it would not be better for her if the divorce became an accomplished fact.

The Emperor left for Italy. While there he conferred the title of Prince of Venice on the Viceroy. This title was also that of the heir to the Italian throne, and Eugene's new honor aroused much comment. I did not know what to think and began to believe that the question of a separation had never been considered seriously by the Emperor.

During the Emperor's trip to Italy my mother frequently came to see me, for having returned to Paris I was obliged to remain constantly on my chaise longue.

The princes whom I had received informally at Fontainebleau continued to attend my evening receptions regularly.

They all had some request to make. The unfortunate position they were in made me sympathize with them, and I took the greatest pains to make them forget that they were doubly in a position of inferiority, being vanquished enemies living as strangers in the land of those who had conquered them.

Consequently, they seemed to enjoy coming to my home more than going elsewhere, and, in spite of all the amusements, balls and other entertainments the capital offered, they never missed dropping in to see me at least for a few moments. They often told me that they felt at my house as if they were in the midst of their own family circle and that a sister could not have given them better advice than they received from me.

"If I ever find myself in an embarrassing position," the Grand Duke of Wurzburg, brother of the Emperor of Austria, one day said to me, "I shall ask you what I should do."

I can readily imagine that my advice was useful, for it sprang from a sincere sympathy for their misfortunes. On New Year's Day I gave little gifts to all my household and my intimate friends. I suggested to the princes that they consider themselves included among the latter, and attend the festivities.

It was a real family party. Among other presents, I gave a portrait by Isabey of the young Russian Princess whom her husband the Prince of Mecklenburg mourned so bitterly. The portrait formed the cover of a box. The Emperor's return put an end to these visits. He was very severe regarding the manner in which foreigners were to be received and declared they should be admitted only to the fashionable clubs and not to our homes.

Prince William of Prussia had just arrived, and as Prussia was protesting against a number of things people thought it was his presence that caused this rule to be made. On the other hand, the princes, vexed at being forbidden to call on us, sought refuge in the drawing-rooms of the royalist

Faubourg Saint-Germain where they heard the Emperor spoken of in a manner which doubtless was more in accordance with their personal feelings.

One day the Emperor was blaming me for having received them and said "Are there not enough Frenchmen in the world that you have to invite foreigners who can never care for us whatever happens? But of course, they have such nice manners, and ladies always seek to make themselves agreeable to everyone."

"Ah, Sire," I interrupted, shocked by his last remark, "I am too anxious that they have a good opinion of my conduct to seek to make myself too agreeable to them."

The Emperor smiled and said nothing more about the matter. At that time, he had made up his mind to marry my mother's cousin Stephanie Tascher to the Duc d'Arenberg.

He was a nice clever boy but not attractive. His family, which was most respectable, was very anxious for the match. The wedding was performed at my house. All the young man's relatives from Bruxelles and Germany were present.

The Emperor and Empress also attended the ceremony. Princess Stephanie did not appear extremely enthusiastic about her husband, although her caprice for General Rapp was entirely a thing of the past. For the last two years she had remained constantly at Saint-Germain. I heard later that the Prince of the Asturias had wished to marry her and had made a formal request for her hand.

The Ambassador from Würtemberg had presented a similar request on behalf of the Crown Prince of Würtemberg, but the Emperor declined to consider either of these. The new couple were not at all happy. I was never able to persuade Stephanie to go to Brussels to see her husband's family, who were very anxious to have her do so. She was kind and gentle, even easy-going as regarded the details of her daily life, but obstinate in her opinions and overromantic in her emotions.

She had the melancholy courage seven years later to have her marriage annulled on the ground of constraint, and later she married the Comte de Quirry, my mother's equerry. At the same time another marriage took place at the house of the Princess Caroline, that of Murat's niece with the heir of the Hohenzollern family.

The Prince's mother was present. It was the second time she had come to Paris since so many changes had taken place in our private fortunes. She had done much to keep her husband on his throne, and we were pleased to think that our long friendship had proved useful to his dynasty.

I recalled how kind she had been to us during the Revolution, and I always received her at my house as though she were my mother. She often repeated that she should have wished to confer a title on me.

As of all human weaknesses the one most common in Germany is a desire to be related to royalty, the Princess would have preferred to have her son marry some young member of our family

rather than a relative of the Murats, whose rise in station she considered rather too recent.

Nevertheless, the marriage was a success and the couple are still happy. Nothing more was said about the divorce, but everything indicated to me that the Emperor was torn between a desire to have a son and heir and a reluctance to separate from the woman whom he loved and who had always been so devoted to him.

A few days before he left for Bayonne, I entered his drawing-room to say good-by. My mother was just leaving the room. The Emperor was sitting down and seemed thoughtful and preoccupied. As he saw me enter, he did not stir but looked at me closely without saying a word, the time for my confinement was very near.

Suddenly he exclaimed: "It hurts me to see you like that. How I would love your mother if she were in that condition!"

Then he again lost himself in thought until the Empress returned. This preoccupation, the sudden exclamation that had escaped him, all seemed to me to prove that he was obsessed and tortured by the idea of a divorce.

Nevertheless, he left with my mother for the south of France, and she was not worried as long as he was at Bayonne where his attention was wholly absorbed by negotiations with Spain. Thus, I found myself alone in Paris, a prey to all my mental anguish, without any consolation other than that which I could find in the company of my ladies in waiting and the officers of my household.

I was convinced myself that the end of my confinement was also to be the end of my earthly life and I did not dread to see this end approaching.

I had become more and more attached to my surviving son. His delicate health required my constant care, but his father's wish that the boy should join him in Holland frightened me and made me foresee further misfortunes. The child fell dangerously ill of a tertian fever. In spite of my own ill health I did not leave his bedside and I felt that other sufferings still were in store for me.

As had been agreed Adele wrote me when occasion offered an exact account of whatever went on in Holland that concerned me. My husband had not been able to prevent public prayers being offered for my recovery, but when surrounded by his courtiers he made biting remarks about me, which wounded Adele to the heart.

He talked about me often with her at this period, telling of the violent love with which I had inspired him, and of the way in which I had ruined his life. He wished always to put all the blame on me but could find only imaginary wrongs of which to accuse me. His unfortunate character caused him constantly to think up new grounds for suspicion, which embittered his feelings still more.

One day the King sent for his surgeon, a man skilled in his art, but rough and uneducated. "I am counting on you," the King said, "to do me a great service. People are anxious I should go to Paris and be

present at the Queen's confinement. Perhaps this is a plan to deceive me. Perhaps the child has already been born. I think in fact this is what has happened. You should certainly be able to tell if her pregnancy is a simulated one. The excuse for your trip will be to take my son back with you."

On leaving the King the surgeon told Monsieur de Broc of the errand he was being sent on and Madame de Broc hastened to communicate with me.

At the same time, she advised me to receive the surgeon and take every precaution to convince him of the actual state of my health in order that he might reassure my husband and calm his constantly increasing uneasiness.

Her letter was sent me in a shoe which the surgeon brought with him, little guessing what the package contained. Imagine my state of mind on learning what low means of espionage my husband employed.

He dared put my reputation at the mercy of an utter stranger. The passion which blinded my husband's reason caused him to forget all they prayers he had uttered, the efforts he had made and the resistance he had been forced to overcome in order to secure our reconciliation.

Was he not teaching me that there is a point beyond which the most obstinate desire to insure another person's happiness cannot go? Was it not he who was breaking the mournful chain of duty which I had once more consented to assume?

From that day on my mind was made up I would never again return to him. I was at my son's bedside, suffering from the most intense mental anguish, the result of all the foregoing thoughts, when the surgeon was announced. "Enter, monsieur," I said. "Look at me closely and you can report to the King the exact condition in which you found me." The man stammered, attributed the idea of sending him on such a mission to my husband's ill health and to his natural cast of mind. When he returned to Holland and told the King what had taken place, Louis, unable to believe that anyone could have betrayed him, sent for Monsieur de Broc and declared I must be mad to have spoken in such a manner.

Who is the person whose health and strength could resist such constantly repeated insults and misfortunes? My health had received a fatal blow; it would doubtless have given way completely if the presence of my unborn child had not once more animated my courage. But nothing could dispel a dark and gloomy tinge that colored all my thoughts.

Following the surgeon's depressing visit I daily felt violent pains that seemed to indicate the approach of my confinement. A month went by and I became accustomed to them. I counted that there was still another week to wait. Caroline came and invited me to take my son to a party she was giving that evening for her children.

I accepted and drove there, lying in my carriage, and taking all the precautions my condition rendered necessary. But even this simple outing brought on more severe pains. Tight-rope dancers, executing their performances near the children, and who I constantly feared would fall on my son,

increased my nervousness. High Chancellor Cambaceres, who according to the law was obliged to be present at my confinement, was constantly expecting a summons on account of my increasing weakness.

That evening, as he was not at all well himself, he came up to me and said: "As I see your Majesty at a reception I need not expect to be called tonight and with your permission I shall return home and have leeches applied."

"You may leave," I replied. "I hope you will not be disturbed." A few moments after his departure my pains became so violent that I had no further doubt that I was about to give birth to my child.

I quickly climbed back into my carriage and scarcely had time to reach home. My accoucheur was sent for, and the authorities who were obliged to attend me on that occasion were notified. My equerry Monsieur de la Ville, who was sent to summon the High Chancellor, found him still suffering from the effect of being leeched.

Nevertheless, since he was a punctilious observer of etiquette, he obeyed the summons although in a condition which aroused the mirth of all Paris.

In the night of the 20th and 21st of April, 1808, I gave birth to a son. I should have preferred a daughter, but the announcement that the baby was a boy caused my mother great joy, and the Emperor ordered a salute to be fired all along the Spanish border where he then was.

The birth of a second possible heir to the throne fitted in admirably with his political plans. In order to convey the news to him officially I dispatched my French chamberlain as messenger, at the same time sending my Dutch chamberlain Count Bylandt to take the news to my husband.

The King had the event announced to his subjects from the palace balcony and received the customary congratulations. I learned later that the surgeon had declared in the drawing room "Queens have the right to be pregnant a shorter time than other women; they do not count as ordinary people do."

My son was so delicate that I feared from his birth I should lose him. It was necessary to bathe him in wine and wrap him up in cotton in order to keep him alive.

I did not care whether I lived or not myself; my gloomy forebodings concerning the future made the idea of death quite bearable. In fact, I was so convinced that my last day had come that I asked my physician whether I could survive another twenty-four hours.

My condition seemed to him quite inexplicable. As a matter of fact it grew worse steadily. A visit from Monsieur de Talleyrand added to my sense of discomfort and affected my nerves in a disagreeable manner. He was one of the officials who were supposed to be in attendance when my son was born.

He always wore his hair powdered. The smell of the powder was so strong that when he came close to me to express his good wishes I thought I should suffocate. I did not dare say anything as long as he remained, but I felt that his presence was bad for me. My mental anguish still further increased the seriousness of my physical condition.

Utter discouragement came over me and I thought I was about to die. It was then that my pulse ceased to beat regularly and that my consumption began to develop. No longer was I insensible to pain. On the contrary everything affected me and alarmed me. If my son happened to be ill I thought he was dying. If I left the house for a moment my imagination would conjure up pictures of the terrible things that might happen during my absence. I stared anxiously at the first person I met and was not reassured until I was back again with my children.

If a man rode along beside my carriage, I fancied he had been thrown off and I felt the wheels go over his body. If people picked up my son I sprang forward, for he seemed to be slipping from their grasp. Yet since I continued to live on in spite of all the sufferings provoked by my nervous condition it must have been because my destiny willed it. It was necessary that I should continue to live and suffer. Queen of Holland, Princess of France, mother of two princes, sole heirs to the most glorious throne of Europe, I spent my days in sorrow and wretchedness of spirit.

How often did I envy the lot of those whose lives are spent in the midst of their family and friends, who can be cared for and comforted without attracting the curiosity of strangers! But royalty has no family. Mine was scattered: my brother lived far away; my mother was not with me. My husband's jealous nature had estranged all my old friends. No one was left who could console me and sympathize with my troubles.

Condemned to lie day after day on a chaise longue my only amusement was to sing old ballads to the accompaniment of my guitar and I was too worn out for even that mild recreation. My lungs had become so delicate that singing was forbidden me. I resigned myself to the spectacle of watching what natural talents I possessed disappear, and my gloomy fancy intensified my physical ailments since it conjured up imaginary ills in addition to my real ones.

The continued weakness of my new-born child, which made me very uneasy, remedied for a while my general prostration. The baby nearly died. It became necessary to change his nurse, and I went myself to a village to secure a new one. But this brief revival of energy due to my maternal anxiety cost me dearly. I took cold while caring for my son and was afflicted with terrific headaches. Will my readers believe me? I enjoyed this physical pain. It banished for a short time that moral depression which is so bitter, so exhausting to a heart over-flowing with grief.

As a climax to all my troubles the Emperor's family took exception to the fact that I was staying on in France. My husband's mother declared openly that I had abandoned her son when he was ill, unhappy, and wretched because I was not with him. At a time when I was wasting away before their very eyes, when the doctors had given up all hope of my recovery and when I did not dare speak of the grief that gnawed at my bosom, it was still I who was considered in the wrong. The thought of my returning

to Holland made me tremble.

Yet if I did not do so the public, not understanding the reasons which prompted my actions, would severely condemn me. On the other hand, if I did go, would not my reputation suffer at least as much from the remarks and attitude of a husband such as mine?

What a piteous dilemma I was in! One day Madame Campan came to see me. She understood my character and guessed how miserable I was. "Do not let yourself pine away," she said to me with tears in her eyes. "I know how discouraged you are, but it is necessary to face life as it is. Live on, and in the end your conduct will be appreciated and more fairly judged."

What good could such advice do to a broken spirit? Affairs in Spain were becoming serious. The Prince of the Asturias had seized the throne from his father. The Emperor summoned them both to Bayonne. My mother often told me how, on this occasion, the anger and hatred of the parents toward their son expressed itself with a directness and vivacity such as our Northern and more controlled natures find difficult to understand.

The father seemed to find a sort of joy in surrendering his crown as long as it should not be given to his son. The throne was bestowed on Joseph, at that time King of Naples.

Consequently, the throne of Naples became vacant. Caroline at once left for Bayonne and returned shortly afterwards proud and triumphant at having been made Queen of Naples. I could not understand her satisfaction. She had been happy where she was with her husband, free from the cares of state and the obligations of authority.

Rich, surrounded by everything that can insure comfort and confer happiness on others, yet she was willing, even anxious, to set aside all this in order to obtain a crown.

Indeed, the thought delighted her. Happiness consists in a harmony between our tastes and our position in society. Why was it that I could not appreciate the brilliant, distinguished life Fate offered me as highly as I would have done the calm tranquillity of some more modest lot?

Probably because my affection for certain people meant more to me than anything else in the world, and in my position, there was no way in which I could express that affection. To be sure I had abandoned all my youthful dreams of domestic bliss and for years had not dared even to think of them again. Sorrow was all that life held for me. How could it be otherwise since the bond of matrimony which I believed should be the fairest portion of my existence was its most galling burden? My children's life, their mother's reputation were at stake in this question of my leaving or remaining in France. It was absolutely necessary that I look after my sons in that Country and there too I felt that I must gain the appreciation of the persons whose opinion mattered.

That other affection for Monsieur de Flahaut, whose appeal I had so long resisted, appeared to have been transformed into a tender friendship, a friendship such as my heart desired and which could

console me for the unjust opinion people were beginning to have of my conduct.

Who knew me better than the man I had loved so dearly in the past? Who could better appreciate my force of character than he whom I had so long avoided in spite of the strength of my inclination for him? Since the last campaign he had remained in Germany.

The war was over. I no longer worried over the question of his safety. He sympathized with the misfortunes which had befallen me and had written me several times. On his way to take the waters in the Pyrenees he passed through Paris. I discovered that his sentiments toward me, his respectful admiration had not changed, and I felt that at least this friendship might prove a source of support for me in my affliction.

It was in such feelings as these that I sought consolation for all the affection that I failed to find elsewhere.

Consequently, I did not seek to hide from the man who seemed worthy of my confidence either my sorrows, or the extent of my discouragement, or the hopes which I placed in him.

"Friendship," I told him, "is the noblest sentiment the human heart can conceive. But at the same time, it is also the most difficult to achieve since it constantly demands perfection. Love demands only a tender reciprocity of feeling. Friendship requires also nobility of ideals.

Anyone can be a lover, but how many people know how to remain friends? In other words, how many people can treat another human being with that frankness which admits one's own mistakes combined with that tolerance which accepts the weaknesses of others? Hence do not fear to confide in me your affection for another woman.

I insist that you do so. I am sure of myself I can bear both my grief and yours too. I want only to be the consoler of misfortune, which is so frequent that to seek its remedy it is to assume a duty both arduous and sweet."

Monsieur de Flahaut remained only a few hours in Paris. My complete yielding to all those emotions which I considered quite innocent had perhaps a tendency to fill my mind with new hopes as vain as the old ones had been.

I was preparing more disappointments for myself, which I should become aware of as by degrees I discovered the truth. But as yet I did not surmise what lay before me. The mutual confidence we had promised one another was enough for me.

My resolve to forgive whatever there might be to forgive removed all fears of ever being deceived by my friend. One day I went to see Caroline whom I found in the midst of preparations for her departure for her new kingdom.

She hurried about, now inspecting her traveling carriages, now coming back to speak to me, then dashing off to give an order with a smile, returning the next instant to shed a tear.

"Hortense," she finally said to me, "I must confess to you my grief at leaving France in spite of the crown which Fate has placed on the head of my children. You have never guessed the depth of my affection for Monsieur de Flahaut.

How often have I feared that his feeling for you was equally intense! You are the only woman in the world I should have feared as a rival. He seemed to care for you, but this affection was only a fictitious one.

Although he was young and frivolous, it is impossible he could love anyone as he did me. It is impossible twice to experience the feelings I aroused, and hid it not been for my duties and my love for Murat I do not know whether I should have been able to resist his advances.

I dread the despair the news of my departure will cause him. He will perhaps try to console himself in your company, but promise me not to take him seriously.

He must remain faithful to me. He has cared for me too dearly to do otherwise. The idea that another woman might attract him would be torture for me."

I had let her finish her sentences without interrupting her. My breath failed me. Part of what she was telling me I already knew, but it seemed as though I was hearing it for the first time, so intense was my pain. I collected all my courage and replied "Why should you fear me? You know nobody is interested in me."

"You are the only woman I am afraid of," she replied emphatically. "I cannot tell how you do it, but you have a secret for attracting men and making them admire and sympathize with you. There are women more beautiful than you are. For instance, I know I am the better-looking of us two, but you must have some special charm of your own because everyone is drawn to you. A thousand times I have tried to make Monsieur de Flahaut say he disliked you. He never would do so.

It seemed when I spoke of you as though I were referring to some sacred being; but I know you and trust you. I saw him a few days ago when he came through Paris.

The glimpse of a bracelet I was wearing upset him, for his love for me is as jealous as it is intense. Your name came into my mind and I told him the bracelet was a present from you. Promise me when you see him again not to betray me."

I promised and returned home in a state of mind which is difficult to describe. Had the man who had sworn he was sincere been deceiving me? I had just learned that another woman had been the object of his attentions at the very time he had declared I, and I alone, occupied his thoughts.

True I had asked only for his friendship; but did that not include complete frankness? Made more wretched than I can describe by this cruel uncertainty, I did not know which way to turn. The consolation I had counted on was once again failing me.

More alone than ever, indifferent to everything that went on about me, obliged to keep all my troubles to myself, I grew more ill and my illness threatened to prove serious.

Frequently I felt my interest in Monsieur de Flahaut revive. I said to myself: "It is true that he deceived me, but perhaps he is bitterly unhappy at the loss of the woman he loves and if he really is fond of her how could he have spoken about the matter to me?"

The one thing he did which was wrong was to make me believe that I was the only woman he cared about. But he is sad and in pain. I must forgive him. We must again be friends."

He returned to Paris before Caroline's departure but left at once for the Spanish front. I was at Saint Cloud at the time with my mother, who had come back from Bayonne.

As soon as Queen Caroline had informed him of our conversation Monsieur de Flahaut wrote me and explained everything. He declared Caroline had told him that she had spoken as she did in order to separate us and added: "I am sure that after our conversation Hortense will not care for you anymore. She is too romantic to do so under such conditions, and that was what I wanted, as the idea that you cared for her was very disagreeable to me."

Monsieur de Flahaut wrote me these details and I believed him. They seemed probable enough. Perhaps too I wished to deceive myself. Nevertheless, there remained in my mind a feeling of suspicion, which prevented me from being entirely at ease.

Henceforward no man's affection seemed to me stable enough to be depended upon; yet how can one live without some such support? My mother had come back from Bayonne. The visible change in my health frightened her, and she wished me to come and live with her at Saint Cloud.

Life as it was there, although it had charmed me before my marriage because I had found much with which to occupy my time, now wearied me on account of its futility and the need I felt of having occupations which would take my mind off my own worries, and give me something to do that was not directly connected with myself.

Instead of that I was not left alone an instant. I spent the mornings in my mother's drawing-room where she worked on her embroidery, surrounded by her ladies in waiting. For hours on end I would sit beside one of these ladies, watching her thread go in and out, without being able to say a word or follow a line of thought. Every few minutes my mother would leave the room in order to receive some visitor or hear some petition.

She did not dare leave the palace for fear the Emperor might wish to see her and might come along the balcony looking for her as he did frequently. Between the completion of some special task and

a meeting of his ministers he often took a little stroll with her. It was he who fixed the hour at which we were to go driving with him.

We always had to be exactly on time and almost always were obliged to wait an hour or two for the council meeting to be over. Finally, the Emperor appeared, and through wind, rain or snow he would drive for several miles in the country, returning finally to the palace.

Often the Emperor, his mind still full of the problems that had been discussed at the meeting or busy with some other weighty question, would hardly say a word. After the drive we dressed for dinner, which we took alone, the Emperor, the Empress and I.

Sometimes the conversation was not more lively than it had been during the drive. After dinner the Emperor returned to his work. The Empress played a game of whist in her drawing-room. I did not care for cards but nevertheless played also until ten or eleven o'clock when we all went to bed.

The emptiness and dreariness of such a monotonous life were more than I could bear, and the weakness of my lungs increased. Madame de Broc heard what an alarming condition I was in. For a long time, I had been longing to have her with me, but did not wish to disturb her happiness, or make any effort to bring her to me.

As soon as she heard how ill I was she hastened to my side. Her excellent husband willingly consented to this sacrifice. No sooner had she arrived than I poured out to her sympathetic ear all my troubles.

Her presence was a relief to me. My husband had given up writing to me. He several times even returned my letters without having broken the seal, after having pointedly pushed them aside in the presence of his courtiers. I felt that I had done wrong in not acceding to his request that I should travel to Holland for my confinement. Since I was no longer present his suspicious nature, having no direct object, busied itself with the affairs of all those about him.

If a French courtier who was familiar with our married life tried to defend me when my reputation was attacked, he would at once be dismissed from court.

He considered they must be spies, either of mine or of the Emperor.

Already the King had received several reprimands from his brother about the smuggling that went on between Holland and England."

The Emperor always considered subjects in their broad lines. The King on the contrary was only interested in minute details. A single idle phrase was enough to arouse his suspicion. He reflected as to what reasons might have prompted it, drew all sorts of conclusions from it and finally discovered a treasonable significance that had no basis other than the activity of his own imagination.

The result was that the majority of the Frenchmen whom he had taken to Holland with him were dismissed on account of something they had said, some doubt he had conceived in regard to their conduct.

Instead of being definitely dismissed, however, they were sent on special missions or received other posts, as for instance Monsieur de Caulaincourt, whom he appointed Ambassador to Naples. The others were shifted about: Monsieur d'Arjuzon, who had been the King's high chamberlain, became my first gentleman in waiting. Messieurs Devaux and de La Ville were appointed my equerries.

Consequently, in a short time I had so numerous a household that I did not know how to pay them all, especially as my income which I received from France was only that of a French princess.

Monsieur Decazes also arrived with a letter from my husband appointing him my private secretary. I had already Monsieur Despres, an elderly man who had been with me for a long time and with whom I was thoroughly satisfied. This was the only occasion on which I refused to carry out my husband's wishes in regard to my household. I had my reasons for doing so.

A few days before my departure from Cauterets, Monsieur Decazes, a fine-looking young man with excellent manners, arrived there. I received few visitors. He knew my reader and came to call on her.

Grief-stricken over the loss of his charming young wife, who had died after they had been married seventeen months, he was seeking some way of taking his mind off his sorrow.

The object of his journey made him a sympathetic figure to us. He asked to be presented to me and appeared so unhappy that I did not feel justified in refusing his request.

The day I met him he spoke of his wife, of his grief at losing her, and the need he felt of leaving France after such a shock. He wished me to obtain a post for him at my husband's court.

I suggested that he secure an introduction through his father-in-law, Monsieur Muraire, when he returned to Paris, and promised that I would also use my influence with the King. My trips into the mountains were just beginning at that time. I saw the young man only once more and then did not hear him mentioned again.

Monsieur Decazes' father-in-law, who was president of the Court of Cassation, presented him to my husband as I had suggested, and the King on our return to Paris from the Pyrenees appointed him his secretary and sent him off immediately to Holland.

I heard one day someone belonging to the Murat household say meaningly "The Queen of Holland saw a great deal of a certain young man while she was taking the waters and secured a post for him at her husband's court. That was very clever of her, I'm sure."

I could not imagine that this bit of spiteful gossip referred to anyone I knew as slightly as I did Monsieur Decazes and I paid no attention to it. But when Monsieur Decazes returned from Holland to assume the duties of my private secretary the remark came back to me and I declined to accept him.

The Queen of Naples one day when she was visiting me remarked: "Did you know that people are saying you have taken a fancy to that young man? I have had this repeated to me so many times that I wasn't sure myself about it, but I have just been watching you both, and I see there's nothing in the story."

Nevertheless, he is both vain and a braggart, for Fouché tells me that he goes about saying he is on the best of terms with you."

Greatly astonished that the Chief of Police, instead of mentioning to me something that concerned me directly, should talk about it to persons who he knew would be only too glad to have reasons for criticizing me, I demanded that he explain such an absurd remark.

He seemed embarrassed, put the blame on the conceitedness of the young man, on the bad effect such gossip had on my reputation, even on the fact that it was he who had asked the Princess Caroline to warn me.

At last I became impatient with him for his evasions. On the other hand, how could I suspect the motives of Monsieur Decazes? I had only known him when bowed down with grief over the loss of his wife. Tears always make one think well of the person who sheds them. What reasons had I for believing that the sorrow of a stricken husband was a mask to conceal the vanity of a coxcomb?

Being still young I had not lost faith in the existence of frankness and loyalty. A too justifiable distrust of human nature had not yet made me critical and suspicious of people's motives. Moreover, Monsieur Decazes as a member of my husband's household must have known the King's character and been aware of our domestic difficulties, nor could there be any doubt that, like all Frenchmen living in Holland, he realized it was I who was in the right.

My misfortunes made everyone sympathize with me, and the public hesitated to condemn my behavior. In order to banish all doubts from my mind I thought it necessary to inform Monsieur Decazes of the remarks that were attributed to him. I expected that he would be deeply pained at such gossip.

He defended himself more or less vigorously, but when he realized that people might believe he had enjoyed my favors for even a short time, a satisfied smile showed that his vanity was rather flattered, and betrayed the true character of a man whom I had considered honorable simply because he happened to be in distress.

I admit that I was wrong in treating him in a manner he misinterpreted. After that he never appeared in my presence except when he came with messages from my husband. The King as soon as I refused to include Monsieur Decazes among my household granted him numerous favors.

Nevertheless, I soon learned the source of the various rumors that were being skillfully disseminated. In the pains taken to sully everything and everybody in any way connected with the Empress I recognized the hand of Fouché, one of the most ardent partisans of the Emperor's divorce.

To serve his ends it was necessary to discredit all the members of the family he sought to force into retirement. My brother's position was impregnable; but how was I to escape the intrigues of a minister so well placed to produce evidence in support of his accusations?

A woman in such cases is always helpless. The public knew the esteem the Emperor had for me. He had shown it on numerous occasions. In order to change his opinion of me and that of the general public nothing was simpler than to declare that I was involved in some entirely fictitious liaison.

This maneuver and many others were necessary in order that Fouché might have excuses for defending the idea of a divorce which France in general did not want.

My mother was too popular. She was too good, too generous, too amiable, too willing to listen to every appeal for help and to aid anyone who might be in trouble.

People could not dream of there being anyone kinder than she or imagine that a better or nobler person could exist. The public's affection was increased by the fear it had of losing her.

The Emperor, aware of this popularity, hesitated to secure a separation. It was in order to overcome his indecision that all sorts of schemes were set in operation. A great fuss was made about the Empress's enormous debts.

It was her kindness of heart that made her incur them and it was the poor who benefited by them. The knowledge of the extent of her generosity and the difficulties in which it involved her increased the public's affection for the Empress.

Only the Emperor, passionately fond of order, was pitiless in his condemnation of her conduct in this respect. The end of the year was always the most painful moment for my mother, crushed beneath the weight of debts that fell due then, debts which she had allowed to accumulate through fear of confessing to her husband the extent of her extravagance.

Having raged about them, the Emperor settled the debts. But the police found ways to revive his wrath by indicating that the Empress had only admitted half of the total of what she owed. Thus, by sowing the seeds of dissension they hoped to bring about a separation.

I was still living at Saint Cloud when the Emperor left for Erfurt, where all the reigning princes of Germany as well as the Emperor of Russia were to meet him. I witnessed the tears my mother shed when she thought about this journey. The Emperor reassured her, saying this gathering was purely political and had nothing to do with those family alliances which were being talked about. As a matter of fact the intimacy which existed at the time between the Emperor Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia led people to suppose that a marriage between Napoleon and the Grand Duchess Catherine of Russia

might take place.

The result of the meeting at Erfurt was still further to increase the intimacy between the two monarchs. This was shown by all sorts of incidents.

For example, in a tragedy given by French actors which they attended, at the line,

"A great man's friendship is a gift of the gods —"

Emperor Alexander leaned over and threw his arms around Emperor Napoleon, embracing him. The Princess of Baden was extremely popular at Erfurt. The Emperor of Russia was most attentive to her.

Duroc, who told me about it, also spoke of Alexander's passion for another woman, which had lasted fifteen years.

He added: "He is the only man who might turn your Majesty's head. For your own peace of mind, I hope you will never see him. In spite of the attention he showed your cousin I am sure if he met you, he would be unfaithful to everything else he cared about."

"You are flattering me," I replied;

"I do not believe that I know how to charm people."

"You do more than charm them," he continued.

"You arouse their sympathy, and knowing the Emperor Alexander as I do, I am convinced that your character and your intellect would please him greatly.

I must admit he has all the gallantry of a French knight. We no longer have that refinement of feeling and sentiment which he possesses and which is necessary to please you."

"Then I must take care never to see him," I exclaimed. laughingly. "Judging by what you say we are so absolutely made for one another that we could not escape our mutual attraction. Although I am no great believer in the theory of love at first sight, I consider it very fortunate that I did not happen to be at Erfurt. There at any rate Fate kept us apart."

I was completely ignorant of what was going on in the political world, and the Emperor preferred not to inform me of such matters, even when our own most vital interests were involved. I only learned that my eldest son had been made Grand Duke of Berg when the master of ceremonies wrote my chief lady in waiting, asking when I could receive the visit of congratulation from the Senate.

I sent my son to thank the Emperor and I received the congratulations regarding this event without feeling the least pleased about it. I can only explain this indifference on the ground that our

rank was already so exalted that a duchy more or less did not make much difference. On the contrary I feared that the additional pomp connected with his new title might give my son false ideas regarding his importance in the world, for I specially desired him to have merits of his own, and constantly belittled all those gifts which his birth conferred on him, trying to persuade him that only what he accomplished by himself had any real value.

Personally, I frequently felt depressed at the thought of all these crowns held by our family and the idea that my sons were the sole heirs of all this power. I fancied that in time they would be separated from me forever, one ruling in the North, one in the South, and all the pomp and circumstance of royalty seemed to me to hold no promise of happiness either for me or for the rest of my family.

I was never one of those to whom the wearing of a crown meant happiness. Thus, our imagination frequently evokes misfortunes which never take place, while at the same time it does not foresee the other evils that Fate holds in store for us.

After the council at Erfurt the various generals set out for Spain. Caroline went to Naples, my mother and I took the Emperor to Rambouillet whence he left to join the army in Spain. The Empress was even sadder than usual on this occasion when she said good-by to her husband.

"Will you never stop making war?" she asked him. And I remember how the Emperor answered:

"Do you mean to say you think I enjoy doing it? Don't you think I would rather stay where I have a good bed and a good dinner instead of facing all the hardships I have before me? Don't you think I am the same as other men? You're wrong. I know how to do other things besides wage war, but necessity and my duty toward France force me to do so. It is not I who command the course of events. I only obey."

This war began under such unfavorable auspices that everyone was vaguely worried about the outcome. The officers did not undertake it with that martial eagerness which I noticed on other occasions; they only obeyed orders. No one can witness the departure of the persons she cares about without feeling apprehensive.

Perhaps this was particularly true in my own case, for being ill I was inclined to exaggerate all possible harm that the future might bring. It was the fashion just then to collect carved Turkish jewels and I had a large number of them. I imagined that an amulet given by me might act as a talisman; at least I made myself think this, in order to give away a great many little gifts, so as to have an excuse for sending one to a particular person.

Moreover, I said to myself "Why should not my lot have certain compensations? If I am unhappy perhaps at least I can bring good luck to others. In that case I should not complain of my own fate."

I gave all the Emperor's aides-de-camp these little amulets, recommending them to wear the object constantly if they wished to be safe from all danger. When one's sentimental interests are at stake it is astonishing how the smallest things become important. For instance, a number of my young ladies who were very much in love with their husbands, among them Madame Philippe de Segur, came and asked me very seriously for one of my Turkish talismans. As it happened almost all those who wore my amulets escaped every danger. Monsieur de Bongars, for instance, who was thought to be dead, found refuge in a convent.

While he was still missing and when everyone was worried about his fate, I always declared he would come back safely because he had one of my tokens.

General Colbert lost his during an engagement. He wrote asking me to send another. I was about to do so when word reached me that this really distinguished man had been killed. The news was a shock to me and without intending to I exclaimed: "Why did he lose my amulet?"

I realized then that I had come to attach a superstitious importance to something that at first had been merely an idle whim.

After that I always sent a talisman to my brother at the beginning of each new campaign and I should have been worried if he had neglected to wear it constantly.

Everywhere my uneasiness sought for some form of remedy, and I came to consider important things that my reason knew were futile. The Emperor before he left had expressed his hope that I would return to Holland.

After all I had endured, I considered it cruel on his part to oblige me to go back to a man who had made me so miserable.

"Have I no family of my own?" I said to myself. "I seem to live here on sufferance only, whereas they ought to be glad to see me living away from my husband, on account of my reputation to say nothing of my health. I am not guilty of any of the faults of which I am accused. People know it and yet do not take my part. Instead of any longer hiding so jealously the way in which my husband has persecuted me, as I have done up to now, had I not better reveal my sufferings and make my misfortunes known to everyone?

Should I not accuse him openly and demand just compensation for all the pain he has caused me? I took all the blame on myself, therefore it is I who have to pay the penalty for having done right. Now, when I complain, I am treated like a child who protests against his master's treatment.

Thus my distress made me unfair, for I should have remembered that after all I was only the Emperor's stepdaughter, whereas my husband was his own brother. He could not defend me without attacking Louis, and he was already doing a great deal for me in allowing me to remain so long in Paris when I should really have been in Holland.

Doubtless it was on account of my children that the Emperor allowed me to remain so long in France in spite of all the efforts of my husband's family to make me leave sooner. One day I received the visit of Grand Marshal de Broc, who, like the other Frenchmen, did not find his stay at the Dutch court any more agreeable on account of the additional titles he received there.

He had as a matter of fact been commanded by a royal decree to give up his French citizenship. He refused to do so and enlisted as a volunteer in order to serve during the Spanish campaign under the orders of his brother-in-law the Duc d'Elchingen.

He brought me news of something I already suspected. My husband's minister of justice was Monsieur Van Maanen. The King sent for him and gave orders to have everything possible done to discredit me in the eyes of the public. These were the instructions Monsieur Van Maanen received: "Spread reports that the Queen dislikes Holland intensely, that she is enjoying herself in France and that her conduct there is not at all respectable."

The minister drew back in astonishment and said: "But, Sire, she is your wife and Queen of Holland. I cannot do such a thing as that."

"You are right," replied the King suddenly embarrassed; "I was merely testing your loyalty."

The next day the minister was dismissed. He told the reason for his dismissal from office to everyone and among others to Monsieur de Broc, who repeated it to me.

How was I to believe that passion could so far blind an upright man as to induce him to act in such a way toward the mother of his children? I tried to doubt these stories. I preferred to believe that the minister was making a false report rather than think that my husband was behaving in so abject a manner.

I attempted to excuse the mad actions his jealousy made him commit by reminding myself of that kindness of heart which I had several times had occasion to notice in him. But the mere thought of a reconciliation was enough to make my heart sink within me.

All the misery he had inflicted on me reappeared before my eyes. Overcome with fear the only explanation I could find for his conduct was the hatred I imagined he felt toward me, and I realized the necessity of avoiding placing myself within his grasp.

Since the Emperor's departure my mother was living at the palace of the Elysée. It had been decreed that Frenchmen who received foreign crowns were not entitled to any further income from French sources.

Consequently, I had no allowance with which to pay the expenses of my household, and in order not to be obliged to ask anyone for money I dismissed all my servants. I planned to live at the Elysée with my mother. This decrease in my wealth was the least of my worries.

The Emperor heard what I had done and scolded me severely. He fixed my income at seven hundred thousand francs. As the war interfered with the prosperity of the Paris "luxury" trade the latter had decreased, and many work-men suffered from this depression of business.

The Emperor, who knew how to attend to minor matters as well as to conceive and execute great enterprises, had six thousand francs given me per month in order that I might help the unemployed. Cardinal Fesch, Madame Mere and the Princess Pauline received the same sum, which, together with what they gave personally, amounted to quite an important amount.

As for me I gave as much as I could to relieve the suffering of the poor. I admit the fact quite simply. There is no merit in this if one has a large fortune and a high rank. In such cases it is not necessary, in order to assure one's popularity, to announce the fact in the newspaper.

None of us considered that we deserved the slightest credit for acting as we did, and the Emperor would have been angry had we thought so. While the Emperor was busy with the war in Spain, Austria began to give him grounds for uneasiness and forced him to hurry back without having concluded the other war, which was growing more serious.

Monsieur de Talleyrand, who even after he had given up his post as Minister of Foreign Affairs continued to concern himself with what went on in Spain, had, so it was rumored, advised the policy that the Emperor followed at first.

As soon as he realized that things were not going well, he began to make fun of a campaign which was not as successful as the others had been. One day Madame de Remusat called on me.

She told me how much the reputation of Monsieur Talleyrand had suffered as far as the Emperor was concerned through people's repeating remarks he had never made and saying he had certain opinions which were not at all those he really held.

She wept freely when she informed me how seriously Monsieur de Talleyrand felt his disgrace and declared she had not the slightest idea who could have sought to harm a man like Monsieur de Talleyrand, who was absolutely devoted to the Emperor's interests.

She begged me to grant him an interview and to try to have the Emperor make peace with him. I remembered that his attentions had flattered me while we were at Mayence.

Since then I had met Monsieur de Talleyrand again, and he had not seemed to be aware of my presence. It was true, I had lost my son, and Talleyrand belonged to that class of people who disappear in the presence of misfortune.

Nevertheless, as one of the high dignitaries of the court he had called on me when my latest child had been born and in his carelessly polite manner had said "It depends solely upon your Majesty how many princes we are to have. Our future happiness is entirely in your hands."

Since then I had never even heard him spoken of and I confess I was delighted to have the opportunity of revenging myself for this apparent neglect by doing him a kindness.

Monsieur de Talleyrand arrived a few moments after Madame de Remusat had taken her departure. His attitude conveyed the hope that I would take his part, but he scarcely mentioned what he would like to have me do for him. He was no more cordial in his manner than usual, and I seemed the one who was asking a favor.

The tears of Madame de Remusat and her eagerness to defend her friend's interest contrasted strongly with the indifferent air of that haughty personage.

I promised to speak to the Emperor about him that same evening and I am under the impression that Talleyrand obtained my promise without having asked me for it.

Madame de Staël knew him well. Her portrait of him in the novel called "Delphine," under the name of Madame de Vernon, is a striking one and I have on several occasions noted how closely it resembles the original.

In accordance with my promise I went that same evening to the Tuileries and assumed a chagrined manner in announcing to the Emperor that I had seen a person who was deeply grieved at being in disgrace.

I spoke of that person's devotion to the Emperor and depicted his grief vividly; in fact, I lied so outrageously that I do not know how I managed to keep from smiling.

When at length I mentioned the name of Monsieur de Talleyrand the Emperor burst out laughing. "Oh, it's Talleyrand you've been talking about, is it?" he exclaimed.

"Do you mean to say he called on you this morning?"

"Yes, Sire, and he seemed greatly distressed."

"But does he think I don't know all the remarks he has been making? He has been trying to make himself popular at my expense. I won't interfere with him anymore. Let him keep on talking if he wants to."

"Sire, how can one repeat the remarks of a man who never says two words in succession? To make such statements is pure libel."

"My daughter, you do not know society. My information is accurate. Though he may not talk against me in front of you he makes up for it at two o'clock in the morning when he is with Madame de Laval and the rest of them."

As a matter of fact, I am not taking any steps against him. Only I wish that he would not interfere with my affairs."

I do not know whether in spite of what he said the Emperor was touched by my description of Monsieur de Talleyrand's grief or whether other persons intervened.

At any rate a reconciliation seemed to take place between the two men. To be sure Talleyrand was not again allowed to hold office, a fact which wounded him on account of his ambitious nature and which he never forgave.

Even his post of Lord High Chamberlain was taken from him and given to Monsieur de Montesquieu. This made people say that the Emperor was too much inclined to humiliate his courtiers and not enough inclined to punish them.

Madame de Talleyrand, whom I knew only slightly, called on me one morning while her husband was still high chamberlain.

"Knowing how kind you are," she said, "may I venture to ask you to include Monsieur de Talleyrand among the persons whom you invite to play whist with you at the Emperor's reception?

He, as Lord High Chamberlain, is the one who arranges your table, he comes and takes your commands as to who are to be invited, and it is disagreeable to him, as one of the principal figures at court, never to be chosen himself by any of the princesses."

I promised Madame de Talleyrand to do as she wished. It had simply never occurred to any of us to ask Monsieur de Talleyrand to play with us as we always believed he was too busy doing the honors.

Vague rumors announced the approach of a new war with Austria. What appeared at first sight to be a minor incident caused us to believe these rumors were based on fact.

Whenever an important reception took place there would always be card-playing after the theatrical performance or the meeting of the Emperor's ministers. We would go upstairs with the Empress to the Emperor's big study, where our tables were set out.

Generally, the Emperor did not play himself, and we and the Empress gave the High Chamberlain the names of the persons he was to invite to play with us.

The persons chosen were generally the principal foreign ambassadors or the high court dignitaries. At the time of which I am now speaking the Emperor said to the Empress with an apparently indifferent air, "Who are your partners this evening?" and without waiting for a reply gave the names of three persons.

He asked us the same question and also chose our partners. It was easy enough for us to guess that this was done in order to avoid having Monsieur de Metternich, the Austrian Ambassador, invited

to play with us.

Although he was generally invited at one of our tables, on this occasion he was obliged to play with the ladies in waiting.

Like Madame de Talleyrand, Madame de Metternich also came to see me to ask me to use my influence on behalf of her husband. The latter wished, in order not to make the change in his position too apparent, that I would ask my ladies in waiting not to invite him to play with them.

Since he could not be one of our partners, he preferred not to play at all. I with pleasure complied with Monsieur de Metternich's request. Indeed, I went further and at supper, where we each had our own table and where only the ladies were seated, I took advantage of the fact that the Emperor had not told us either whom we were to invite or whom we were to avoid, and made a point of asking Madame de Metternich to sit at my table the next time there was a reception.

This rather compensated her for what had happened to her husband. Otherwise she ran the risk of being more or less ostracized, for the Emperor's displeasure was contagious and he was not accustomed to see anyone take the part of a person with whom he was displeased. Consequently, when he was walking about during supper and came to my table, he passed by without saying a word when he noticed it was not arranged as he wished. I was not upset about this. Indeed, I rather enjoyed opposing him in this matter as I considered it unfair that Madame de Metternich, who had never had anything to do with politics, should suddenly have people turn their backs on her, instead of crowding around her as they had done a few days before, simply because the Emperor happened to be displeased with her husband.

Too often courtiers seek to win their monarch's favor by exaggerating his attitude. The Emperor suddenly left the court one day without letting anyone know of his intentions. He was in the habit of doing this. He took my mother with him, and she wrote me to join her at Strasbourg and to remain there with her as long as hostilities lasted.

I set out a few days later accompanied by my two children. Before I had reached Luneville I already had news of a victory and as I entered Strasbourg a young page named Oudinot appeared at the door of my carriage and announced another one.

Every day detachments of prisoners marched past under the surveillance of a couple of soldiers. All our troops were at the front, and it frequently happened that when we went out walking beyond Kehl we would find ourselves without any attendants in the midst of the prisoners.

The idea that we might be in danger never occurred to us. I strolled about among them without feeling the least alarm and distributed money, especially to the convoys of the wounded. Marshal Kellermann, who commanded the garrison of Strasbourg, blamed me for taking such risks, especially as I was a member of the imperial family.

But I considered that these men, defeated and unhappy, were not interested in anything except their own misfortunes,

The Queen of Westphalia, who had been obliged to leave Cassel, joined us, as did also the Princess of Baden. Our stay at Strasbourg still further weakened my health, and I allowed myself to be persuaded to try the waters of the little city of Baden, whose picturesque situation and good air might do me good. I did regain a little of my strength there. My children were with me. I was near enough my mother, who had remained at Strasbourg, for me to be able to see her occasionally.

Madame the Baroness de Krudener was at that time at Baden and occasionally came to call on the Princess Stephanie. She talked well, and the stories of her experiences, which she enjoyed telling, were vivid and entertaining.

Since my misfortunes my attitude in society had been listless and dull. I had no strength to indulge in small talk and hardly made even the most commonplace remark to the persons who were introduced to me.

One evening, at the house of the Princess of Baden I let Madame de Krudener keep on talking without paying much attention to what she said, when suddenly my attention was aroused by her description of a young woman who lost someone who was dear to her and gave way to her sorrow.

The close resemblance between the anecdote related by Madame de Krudener and my own feelings at the time of my son's death, as well as a thousand details which she had noticed, made a deep impression on me and made me live over again those sad moments. I was unable to control my emotion and burst into tears. Madame de Krudener sought to console me and from that time on became deeply attached to me.

She often came to see me in the morning. We took long walks together, and her religious views although decidedly unorthodox appeared to me to be, at that time, quite sane and not dangerous.

As she was devoted to the Queen of Prussia, she was pleased to hear my flattering remarks about that ruler based on what my husband, who admired her greatly, had told me.

Endowed with an exceptionally kind heart, Madame de Krudener sought and found in the contemplation of God and in acts of charity those satisfactions which society so rarely affords.

Since then she has yielded to an hysterical emotionalism, which has upset her entire life and made her into the head of a religious sect. The Emperor, hearing I was at Baden, wrote me a letter in which he reproved me severely for having taken his nephews out of France without his permission.

He asked me to send them at once to the Empress. I did so and a little while later followed them myself. The war continued.

Since all we desired was a speedy peace we thought after each new victory that the end was at hand. Having grown accustomed to the idea of the French armies being always victorious, the only thing we worried about was the lives of particular individuals in whom we were interested.

During this campaign I had more than one cause for anxiety. My brother commanded the army of Italy, and we were chagrined to hear that his first battle had not been successful.

He confessed his disappointment in a letter to my mother and expressed himself in such vehement terms as to cause us to fear that he would in the future expose his own life in a still more reckless manner.

Fortunately, he quickly retrieved his initial failure, conducted his campaign in a most brilliant manner, inflicted almost daily defeats upon the enemy and finally joined the Emperor at the head of his triumphant forces.

His arrival took place just after the Battle of Essling, which had cost us so dearly, and this reinforcement was as welcome as it was unexpected and necessary.

The Emperor did not seek to hide his satisfaction. He advanced to meet Eugene and embraced him tenderly in the sight of the entire army. When the Emperor heard that a junction between the two armies had been made possible, he exclaimed:

"Such results are achieved only by a man who puts his whole heart into what he undertakes."

All the official accounts and private letters we received confirmed the news of the death of General Durosnel during the Battle of Essling. We grieved on his account and on that of his young wife, to whom my mother prepared to break the news. I begged her not to do so at once.

I refused to believe the news could be true. The Bulletin said that his body had not been found. Why not therefore give his wife a few more days of hope? My mother guessed what was in my mind.

"I am sure you gave him one of your talismans," she said, "and that is why you refuse to believe he has been killed."

"Yes, I admit that is the reason," I replied.

"Until now I have been so happy for none of the people to whom I have given those keepsakes have been wounded. The thought comforts me and I cannot but feel that the reports must be mistaken and that General Durosnel is still alive."

My mother laughed at me and declared that a fact printed in the official bulletin must be true. A letter with the sad tidings was sent to the young woman, who nearly went crazy with grief.

Every time the matter was spoken of I insisted that the man for whom our tears were being shed was still alive, yet although I continued to make these protests I was as much surprised as anyone else when my mother one day received a letter from General Durosnel, who had been taken prisoner by the Austrians.

He had fallen during a charge, and several regiments had passed over his body. Camp followers came and stripped his belongings from him, and he had only managed to preserve my talisman by taking it off his watch and holding it in his hand. In his letter he requested my mother to express to the Queen of Holland his most profound gratitude as he was convinced he owed his life to the talisman which she had given him. It is easy to understand how this incident strengthened my superstitious fancy.

General Durosnel became even more superstitious than I, for he had casts made of the talisman and presented them to all his friends.

The episode became known, and at the beginning of each campaign the young ladies came with renewed confidence to beg for amulets for their husbands. I never refused. It gave me much satisfaction to act as dispenser of good fortune to others.

CHAPTER IX

THE DIVORCE OF JOSEPHINE: THE MARRIAGE OF MARIE LOUISE: THE ABDICATION OF LOUIS (1809-1810)

A Trip to Plombieres—Return to Paris—Madame de Barral—The Divorce Is Decided on—The Arrival of Eugene and Louis—Fêtes at Paris—December 15, 1809—With Josephine at Malmaison—Madame de Metternich—The Emperor's Dancing Lesson—Hortense as Viceroy—Life at Court—The Arrival of Marie Louise—The Emperor's Marriage —Hortense Leaves for Holland—At the Palace of Amsterdam and the Château of Loo—Departure for Plombieres—Louis Abdicates.

THE Emperor's severe reproof having driven me from Baden, I went with my children to take the waters at Plombieres. I had been to the same place with mother before I married.

I believed I should recover there some of my lost health, some of that gay lightheartedness of youth, which I had not known for so long. When I returned, I found nature had remained the same and only I had changed.

Although the waters did me good. I could not recapture those early emotions which a heart that has known sorrow can never feel again. Mother joined me at Plombieres. While we were there, we received news of the successful battles of Raab and Wagram.

The former victory, won by the army corps which my brother commanded, was announced to us by Monsieur de La Bedoyère, who had become aide-de-camp to Marshal Lannes and whom Eugene had attached to his staff after the Marshal's death.

My brother's continued successes were much commented on in the army. He was considered the Emperor's one legitimate successor.

At the time of the armistice a young German student was arrested during a parade when he was on the point of assassinating the Emperor. The generals and other officers, shocked that such an attempt should have been made and alarmed at the idea of what might have happened, had considered seriously the situation arising from the absence of any direct heir to the imperial throne.

They debated who might have been chosen as the Emperor's successor had the attempt succeeded, and unanimously voted for the Viceroy.

Public opinion throughout France endorsed the verdict. Rumors of this reached the Emperor and displeased him.

They revived all his ideas concerning a divorce and later caused him to say to me during one of our conversations: "It became a necessity; public opinion demanded it."

I believe also that Fouché, with his skill for intrigue and dislike for my brother, took advantage of the episode to bring the matter of a divorce again to the Emperor's attention.

He perhaps even mentioned that my mother and I were deliberately engaged in promoting Eugene's popularity.

At the same time a young Polish countess whom the Emperor had met in Poland appeared in Vienna during the armistice.

My mother knew that this person had been locked up with him in the palace of Schönbrunn although no one caught a glimpse of her. This unfaithfulness on the part of a husband to whom she was still tenderly devoted pained her deeply.

The young woman became pregnant. The Emperor in spite of his suspicious character could not doubt that he was the father of her child, and from that moment on, the hope of having a direct heir in case he married again established itself firmly in his mind.

Continued rain forced the Empress to leave Plombieres, but she felt so sad and so alone at Malmaison that I sent my children to keep her company.

My health prevented me from going with them. For the first time in many months I seemed a little stronger. In spite of the bad weather the waters had done me good.

To be alone there also agreed with me. Very few members of my household were in attendance. The old Chevalier de Boufflers and his wife, who were also alone, were the only people I met.

The wife sewed with me while the husband, still a poet and still a charmer in spite of his age read us his latest works, described his travels or wrote verses.

My uneasiness had disappeared with the close of the hostilities. Once more I felt that peace had come back to my heart. I was so contented that I thought I was happy.

I disliked the idea of returning once more into society. One day a letter from the Comte de Lavallette arrived, saying how much mother was missing me and what malicious gossip my continued absence had provoked.

"Is it possible," I exclaimed, "that a poor sick woman is not allowed to attempt to regain her health in peace? Why do people bother their heads about what I am doing? Who can be jealous of my quiet lot? Must I die in order to make myself uninteresting to these busy-bodies, who are as unjust as they are unfair, or better still have them forget me?"

I left the following day and sought to console my mother, still deeply hurt over the Emperor's liaison with the young Polish lady.

When she saw me, she forgot that she had complained of my absence. But Madame Mere gave me a very chilly reception.

Although I was accustomed to being unfairly treated by the Emperor's relatives, I was nevertheless surprised to have her reprove me for having left my mother, and for having remained alone at a watering-place, especially when my husband was not with me.

To hear her no one would have suspected that at the same time her own daughter, the Princess Borghese, was alone at Aix-la-Chapelle. All that others did was right, all that I did was wrong.

The Emperor arrived at Fontainebleau and sent us word to join him there. My mother instead of being delighted felt worried about the future.

Nevertheless, her husband received her in a fairly friendly manner. His greeting to me was distinctly cold. I had written him from Plombieres asking permission to take a little trip to Switzerland.

He had not answered me. Therefore, I had given up the idea. The first thing he said to me was, "Did you go to Switzerland without my permission?"

Although I assured him, I had not done so he did not seem to believe me and I was forced to think he must have received false reports from the Minister of Police, who pursued his tactics of being hostile toward everything and everybody relating to the Empress.

Thus, rendered miserable by all sorts of unpleasant incidents I might have relapsed into my previous state of discouragement had I not had my mother with me.

The Emperor had made up his mind to obtain a divorce. He was only hesitating as to what means to employ. All his affection, all his tenderness toward my mother had disappeared.

He became unjust and vexatious in his attitude. He seemed to feel that our family was a burden to him and he sought the society of his own relatives. He devoted all his time to them as though he were seeking to make us desire what he did not as yet dare to ask for himself, namely, a divorce.

He did things he had never done before, as for instance going driving without the Empress and only accompanied by the Princess Borghese, whom he went to visit almost every evening.

It was said that a certain woman from Piedmont was the reason for this strange assiduity. I am inclined to think that the Emperor's behavior was merely an effort to distract his mind from what lay before him and to fortify his decision to obtain a separation from his wife.

His mind was made up, but his heart still resisted. He sought to occupy it elsewhere. Perhaps he also was trying to prepare my mother. Thus, it was at Fontainebleau that the Empress again began to suffer. This love intrigue carried on in the very midst of our domestic life added new fuel to the rumors of an approaching divorce. As for me, I admit that I grew indignant as I watched my mother's tears flow

and became aware of the methods being used to provoke them.

My pride was hurt; I wished that the divorce had already been pronounced. My family's rank, my children's future, nothing mattered as much as this humiliating position in which we now found ourselves.

"My brother and I are the only ones who have anything to lose," I said to myself.

"He will be forced to give up the Italian throne. My children will no longer be heirs to the crown of France. But this sacrifice is one that is worthwhile making.

Mother will be happier. Her career is over; at least let us hope that her life may not be shortened by her suffering. If only she could cease to care for the man who is hurting her.

Let us forget all those splendid promises the future held for us and think only of insuring our mother's peace of mind." This was how things stood when we returned to Paris.

One morning the Emperor sent for me. I was out at the time and when I came in he was at a cabinet meeting. I went in to see my mother and found her crying.

She told me that the Emperor had at last informed her he could no longer live as he was doing, that he had decided to divorce her.

"Well, all the better," I replied quickly. "We shall all leave the court and you can lead a quieter life."

"But what will become of you, my children?"

"We shall go with you. My brother agrees with me. For the first time in our life, far from the crowd we can really know what it means to be happy."

This way of looking at things and these plans I made for the future in order to give her something with which to occupy her mind seemed to calm her feelings.

When I left her she seemed resigned to her fate. That evening at dinner a page brought me word the Emperor wished to see me. I went to him as determined as I had been in the morning not to display the least sign of weakness. A sort of pride seemed to strengthen my will. The Emperor stepped out of his study. His manner at first was abrupt; later it became more animated.

He said to me: "You have seen your mother. She has told you what has happened. My decision has been made. It is irrevocable. All France wishes me to secure a divorce. It demands this loudly. I cannot oppose my country's will.

Therefore, nothing will make me change my mind, neither prayers nor tears."

"Sire," I replied, in a calm, icy tone, "you are free to behave as you please. No one will seek to thwart you. Since your happiness makes this step necessary, that is enough. We shall know how to sacrifice ourselves on your behalf. Do not be surprised if my mother weeps. Indeed, it would be more surprising if she did not do so, after fifteen years of married life. But she will submit to your will. We shall all leave your court remembering only the kindness you have shown us."

While I spoke, his face and expression changed. Hardly had I finished when abundant tears started from his eyes, and it was in a voice broken by sobs that he exclaimed: "What! All of you leave me? You will desert me! Don't you love me anymore? It is not to insure my happiness but that of France that I am acting as I am. You ought to pity me for being obliged to sacrifice my most cherished affections."

At the sight of this emotion, which I felt was sincere, I was also touched. I was conscious only that he was unhappy. My pride gave way. I also wept, and my only thought was how I could console him. "Be brave, Sire," I said.

"We shall need courage ourselves at the thought of no longer being your children. But I assure you we shall know how to be brave. We shall understand that in leaving you we are removing an obstacle that stands in the way of your plans and hopes."

For a long time he protested against the idea of our departure, assuring me again that his actions were entirely based on political grounds, that my mother would continue to be his dearest friend, that he would not cease to consider my brother as his son, but that not being Eugene's father he could not make him his heir.

He said that the one way of assuring peace for France was to leave his throne to his own child: he had realized this some time ago, and only his affection for his wife had prevented him from asking for a divorce before.

"Do not believe," he said, "that court intrigues could influence me in any way. On the contrary at the time of the coronation, when I felt that there was a party hostile to your mother, not only did I cause her to be crowned, but I also had her anointed."

At that time, I hoped that by presenting my nephews as my heirs I should satisfy public opinion. But the men I had made powerful insisted that dynastic stability must be assured, and the common people, to whom I feel I am indebted, believe that I am the only protector of their safety and happiness.

After me anarchy will break out again and France will lose the fruit of all she has worked so hard to obtain. Instead of that, if I leave a son brought up in accordance with my ideals, a son whom France will have formed the habit of considering as my heir, the country will be able to enjoy what I have done for her and at least she will benefit by my efforts on her behalf. I shall have borne the pain, others will reap the reward. As for you, your children's interests, which are what a mother should always consider

first, ought to keep you here with me. Therefore, I will not listen to any talk of your going away."

"Sire, my duty is to be with my mother. She will need me. We can no longer live near you. That is a sacrifice we must make. We are prepared to make it."

I returned to report to my mother the conversation that had taken place. Every day brought new conflicts. I persuaded her to let us leave everything behind and follow her, but the Emperor afterwards undid all my work. Frequently my heart bled at the thought of leaving my children. I had hoped to be allowed to keep them with me until they were at least seven years old, and my imagination already pictured all the compensations for my sacrifice which the intervening years might contain.

I dreamed of a possible refuge far from the court, the humble pleasures of a family life which would afford my mother the rest she had long desired. There at least I should be able to console myself.

Freedom from all anxiety would be my compensation for the sacrifice we had made. I was less clear about my brother's future. Knowing his character, I could guess what his own conduct would be. But would his wife, brought up as she had been close to a throne, agree to renounce her position as willingly? Would she not feel too keenly the loss of those high hopes which she had held for the future?

The Emperor sent Eugene word by [optical] telegraph to come to Paris. It was the first time he had been back to France since the day when as a colonel of the Guard he left it at the head of his regiment.

I went to meet him, to inform him of the reason for his trip. Our carriages met at Nemours [December 5, 1809]. He left his carriage and came over to sit in mine.

After we had embraced each other, weeping with joy as we did so, he said to me, "Is the reason for my return pleasant or unpleasant?"

I answered, "Unpleasant." And he guessed the rest. His first words were "Has my mother courage to face it?"

"Yes."

"Very well. We shall all leave quietly and end our days more simply than we began them. But why did they make me marry a princess? My poor wife is the only one to be pitied. She has hoped that her children would wear crowns. She has been brought up to consider that important. She thinks I have been sent for to be named heir to the throne of France.

But she will be brave. She loves me so dearly and she is so fine that she must know that if you do right you can never be unhappy."

While we were traveling back together, I told him everything about what had happened in Paris which I thought might be of interest to him. I had once more found a protector, a friend, and forgetting for a moment the unpleasant cause of his presence I gave myself the joy of unbosoming myself of all my troubles.

He knew a good deal already, but when he found me so altered in appearance, he guessed the rest, and realized the intensity of my sufferings. He admitted to me that he would have had difficulty in recognizing me.

Eugene told me of the charm that enveloped his own home-life, of that perpetual atmosphere of harmony which was a refuge for him after all his labors.

How different our fates had been! All good fortune seemed to have been allotted to him, yet his good fortune became all the dearer to me, for I felt that in a way my own suffering had to some degree made it possible. Far from complaining of what had befallen me I prayed Heaven to continue to send me all the misfortunes of life and to spare my brother.

We arrived at the Tuileries. Eugene immediately went up to see the Emperor, and I returned to the Empress. The latter was deeply moved at the thought of meeting her son again, whom she had not seen since they had met at Munich.

She had never doubted that either he or my children would succeed the Emperor, and all these hopes had suddenly vanished. She grieved solely on our account for, as far as she was concerned, her mind was already made up.

She kept constantly before her those ideas that strengthened her decision: she would remain the friend of the man she loved ; she would continue to live in the same country that he did; her own existence would be simpler; above all, the knowledge that she was doing her share to insure the happiness of France and of the Emperor.

She was determined not to live far away from him, and she waited anxiously to know my brother's opinion on this point, which she feared might be the same as mine.

The Emperor and Eugene joined us, coming down by the private stairway. Our meeting was a painful one. All eyes overflowed with tears. Even the man who when I had seen him was absolutely decided seemed ready to change the resolutions he had formed. But my brother and I assured him the time for that was past. Now that we knew what was in his mind the Empress could no longer be happy with him. We had not taken any action so long as we considered the matter merely a court intrigue or a family cabal, but now that he had explained all to us we felt obliged to leave him.

The Emperor repeated to my brother what he had already said to me. He wished everything to take place amicably. The Empress should not lose either her position or the respect he had for her. My brother insisted that the separation be a complete one.

"Otherwise we might find ourselves in an ambiguous position," he said. "In the end my mother might prove to be in your way. People would dare attack our family, thinking we had been dismissed from court. Our simplest actions would be considered prearranged plans. Even your enemies would hurt our cause by passing themselves off as our defenders, and lead you to suspect us unjustly. It is better to leave nothing behind. Tell us a spot where, far from the court and its intrigues, we can help our mother bear the weight of her misfortune."

The Emperor protested against the poor opinion we seemed to have of him and said, speaking in a serious thoughtful way that showed he was deeply moved "Eugene, if ever I have been useful to you in your career, if you have looked upon me as a father, do not abandon me. I need you. Your sister cannot leave me either. She owes that to her children, who are my nephews. Nor does your mother wish you both to go away. With all your exaggerated ideas you will increase her unhappiness. Indeed, I may say more—you should remember the verdict that history will pass on your mother. You must remain with me unless you wish it to be said: 'The Empress was repudiated, abandoned, and perhaps deserved such treatment.' Is not her attitude a far nobler one if she continues to live near me, to keep her rank and her position, to prove by doing so that our separation was due entirely to political necessities and one to which she consented? She will thereby deserve more than ever the praise, love and respect of the nation for whose good she sacrificed herself."

We did not know how to reply to these new arguments, as powerful as they were unexpected. We were won over by the Emperor's solicitude for his wife's reputation at the very moment he was leaving her.

The attitude of the children toward their mother had to be the same as that of the husband toward his wife.

They would have done wrong not to follow his example. Instead of seeking to oppose the Emperor's wish that we stay at court we were prepared to agree to it, since by doing so we assured our mother so many advantages, a quiet life such as she liked, an opportunity to satisfy her own tastes, and a noble and worthy memory in the minds of all.

Our desires were subordinated to her interests. Already we prepared to accept our new position, which placed us on an equal footing with the crowd that had before been at our feet and made us nobodies still living on amid the same surroundings where they had formerly been all-powerful.

Once the sacrifice had been resolved upon, the only thing left was to carry it out. The Emperor's family met to hear what had been decided. Their joy was apparent in spite of their efforts to conceal it. Although pretending to be touched by what was happening to the Empress, every time they turned to us, of whom they had always been jealous, they betrayed their true feelings by their satisfied and triumphant manner.

It seemed I was always to be obliged to face several troubles simultaneously. Now I heard that my husband had come back.

The Emperor, doubtless with a view to bringing about a reconciliation between Louis and myself, had urged me to write the King about what was going on. I did so. In reply I received a long review of all the misfortunes of which I had been the cause, ending by the expression of a wish, which he considered was probably in keeping with my own desires, that we secure a judicial separation.

After a lunch which the Princess Pauline gave for the Emperor at Neuilly, the Emperor called me over to him, and while the guests were all in the garden slipped his arm through mine and led me a little away from the rest of the people, saying as he did so "Your husband arrives tomorrow. I know he intends to live at his mother's house. I do not approve of that. Here in France I have the right to oblige him to go to his own house, but I know how unhappy his disagreeable character makes you. Tell me, would you feel badly if I ordered him to go to your home?"

"Sire," I exclaimed, "I lack the courage to bear this continually renewed suffering."

"Yet," he replied, "Louis is kind. It is true nobody can live with him, but that is because your gentle nature does not sufficiently curb his faults. An honest woman should always rule her husband."

"Sire, I beseech you, let him do as he wishes." The Emperor appeared undecided. We rejoined the rest of the party, and as a matter of fact my husband, instead of returning to his palace, went to his mother's house.

I admit, in spite of all the malicious gossip this caused, I congratulated myself that he had done so, so much did his presence alarm me. Our not living together was the first indication the public had that we were not a devoted couple. The children always spent their evenings with their father. The youngest one, who had not been well for several days, was not able to go out.

My husband lost his temper and declared openly that I wished to prevent his seeing the little boy. He came alone in the evening to see the baby in his bed in order to convince himself that his son was really ill.

Between married people who are unhappy together everything becomes a reason for quarrels and discussions. The Emperor had insisted that my husband make me a formal visit, and I returned his call.

We occasionally met at the Tuileries and, as I have heard since, he said that he found me so altered in appearance that he felt sorry for me. The King fell ill. I went to see him and entered without being announced, anxious to obtain news of his health. The next day when I went back he refused to receive me. I was much upset.

At last in response to our repeated demands the Emperor called a family counsel to pass on the question of our separation. Neither side was able to present any serious grounds, and the Emperor said several times: "They are children. There isn't as much as a sheet of paper between them. They must make up their quarrel."

During this period many fêtes were being held in Paris to celebrate the Peace with Austria. Everyone was aware that the Emperor's divorce was about to take place, but in accordance with her usual line of conduct the Empress attended all the receptions wearing the imperial crown, although convinced that in a short time it would be worn by another.

At this time and up to the moment of the divorce the kings of Saxony, of Württemberg and of Bavaria were in Paris.

The Empress received them. My brother had gone to meet the King of Bavaria to inform him of the separation. The King was deeply affected by the news. He regretted his arrival just at this time, which made it seem as though he had come to act as a witness.

He wished some definite arrangement to be made as regarded the Viceroy's future. The Emperor was quite agreeable to the idea and proposed to my brother a kingdom made up of the Illyrian provinces, the Tyrol or any other region he preferred.

My brother always replied, "I am asking for nothing at all; do not trouble about me."

The Empress also insisted that something be done about her son, as his title of Prince of Venice did not assure him the Italian crown, which belonged by law to the Emperor's second son.

But the Viceroy was positive in his attitude that he was not prepared to accept a throne or any other advantage that would seem to have been a ransom for the mother's misfortune.

Finally, on December 15, 1809, the day of the divorce, all the family assembled in the Emperor's principal study, where he had been alone with the Empress."

Each took his place in accordance with his rank. The High Chancellor and Count Regnaud de Saint-Jean-d'Angely came in, and both remained standing.

The Emperor took up a piece of paper and began to read in a clear and steady voice. When, however, he came to the phrase "she has made my life more beautiful for fifteen years" his emotion was evident.

The Empress then read her statement. Tears prevented her from completing it.

She handed it to Count Regnaud, who finished it although he too was weeping. The official report of the proceeding having been drawn up and signed by all those present, the Emperor embraced the Empress and led her to her apartment.

A little later he came to fetch me and took me to her. I found her exhausted and over-come with the strain she had been under. I felt it was necessary to keep up her courage to the end. In order to do so I reminded her of the misfortunes of that other queen who had preceded her in this same palace and had left it only to mount the scaffold. I pointed out how much more fortunate she was and dwelt on the

consolations that still remained to her.

Finally, her courage seemed to revive. On the preceding day my brother had gone to the Senate to announce the divorce and declare that it took place with our consent.

The next morning, early, I went to see my mother. Her drawing-room was filled with ladies in waiting, weeping over her departure. I feared the effect this emotion would produce on her, although I felt that the worst was already over.

To leave a court is not the same as leaving a place where you have been happy. I led my mother to her carriage while the Emperor was attending his cabinet meeting.

He had already said good-by to her. I was not present when he did so, but I can imagine how heartrending it must have been. Our trip to Malmaison was a sad and silent one. When my mother entered that house where she had been so happy her heart was heavy with grief.

"If he is happy," she said to me, "I shall not regret what I have done." As she spoke her eyes constantly filled with tears. The day after she had left the Tuileries the Emperor came to see her.

Her attitude in receiving formally the man who only twenty-four hours before had been her husband was widely commented on. The Emperor took her hand and chatted with her for a long time as they walked about near the chateau. Every day he sent her a messenger bearing a letter in which he complained of being lonely and said how much he was missing her.

He went to the Trianon and asked us to come and see him there. I accompanied my mother. The interview was a touching one. The Emperor wished my mother to stay to dinner. As usual he sat opposite her. Nothing seemed to have changed.

The Queen of Naples and I were the only other guests. The Emperor's pages and the Prefet of the Palace were as usual in attendance. No one spoke. My mother was unable to swallow a mouthful, and I looked as though about to faint. The Emperor several times wiped his eyes without saying a word. We left immediately after dinner. My mother afterwards reminded me of the tears she had seen in the eyes of the man for whom she still cared. She seemed to find a moment's comfort in perceiving that he shared her regrets for the past. But time went on.

Letters became more rare, and she still waited for them. There was a little room from which she could get a view of the highroad. Every time she heard that there was to be a hunt in the forest of Saint-Germain she would remain at the window till she had seen the Emperor's carriage pass and repass.

I began to fear that her sacrifice was costing dearer than I had at first thought it would. My brother and I united our efforts to find something to amuse her. She appeared to resign herself little by little to her fate, though for a long while the slightest sign of interest on the Emperor's part was sufficient to satisfy her and renewed her courage.

Moreover, Malmaison was constantly full of a crowd of people who, whether they were petty tradesmen or cabinet ministers or Marshals of France, brought her the homage of their respectful devotion.

When the weather became colder, she expressed a desire to return to the Elysée.

The Emperor consented and came to see her there once or twice. I had not left my mother's side for a single day when I received from the Emperor the notification of my appointment as princesse protectrice of the school for the daughters of members of the Legion of Honor.

He had from the first intended I should hold that post, which attracted me all the more as it placed the daughters of the heroes of France under my protection and guardianship.

I called one evening on the Emperor to express my thanks. He appeared annoyed that I had not returned before to see him.

He thought I was angry, and I was only sad, which was all the more natural after that fruitless effort on my part to obtain a separation, when he had indicated that he wished on the contrary to reconcile me with the King.

I constantly found myself having to bear both my worries in regard to my husband and his own troubles resulting from what was taking place in Holland. Although I knew nothing about politics, I grasped the fact that the King wished to be an independent ruler, free to promote the happiness of his subjects as he thought best, and without being forced to submit to the wishes of the court of France.

This was doubtless a very natural desire and one which sprang from an almost servile attachment to what he considered his duty, to those new obligations assumed on ascending the throne. But how could he expect to maintain his independence at a time when all the other sovereigns of Europe were forced to agree even against their will to the wishes of the man who had conquered them?

I said one day to one of the cabinet ministers who had come to complain about the Emperor's severity that he must know I never took any part whatsoever in politics, and that my husband was receiving bad advice.

Perhaps, had he possessed a force capable of resisting that of the Emperor, he might have separated the politics of Holland from those of France if he judged this was advisable, but since he was not strong enough to do so he was obliged frankly to ally himself with France.

If he did so, even though it proved a costly operation, Holland might hope to secure certain advantages from the continually growing power of its neighbor. But if he acted differently the Emperor might become irritated and annex a country which did not fall in with his plans.

Thus, the King, though acting with the best of intentions, might do the greatest harm possible to Holland by compromising her independence.

This was the one and only talk regarding affairs of state I ever had with any of the Dutch ministers. I ought probably to have shown more interest in public matters which affected my family, but I thought they were no concern of mine, a convenient idea when one has a lazy mind which places its conception of happiness elsewhere than in rank and power.

My mother was much interested to know who was to take her place. She inquired carefully regarding all the eligible princesses in Europe. One day Madame de Metternich called and spoke to her at length about the Archduchess Marie Louise.

My mother seemed to consider her the most suitable person the Emperor could choose. Madame de Metternich wrote her husband about this conversation. She received an answer, which she showed me on account of the liking she had had for me ever since I took her part when everyone else was avoiding her.

According to this letter her husband had shown his sovereign the benefits that would accrue to the states over which he ruled, and the happiness his daughter would have if she were chosen by the Emperor Napoleon as his wife.

The Emperor of Austria seemed quite willing to bestow the hand of the Archduchess on Napoleon if he asked for it.

Only his wife, the Empress, made certain objections. A few moments' conversation with Monsieur de Metternich was enough to overcome these.

This letter had been shown that morning to Monsieur de Talleyrand. Without doubt the Emperor was informed of its contents, for I heard from my brother that he had been ordered by the Emperor to present to the Prince of Schwarzenberg, the Austrian Ambassador, a formal request for the hand of the Archduchess Marie Louise.

A few days before, a cabinet meeting had been called to discuss whether it would be preferable to choose the Russian or the Austrian princess. The opinion of the cabinet was divided. Those who like my brother preferred the Austrian gave as their reason the fact that there was no point of contact between Russia and France and not the slightest danger of hostilities arising between these two countries.

It was far more useful, they said, to fuse into a close alliance the interests of Austria and France, which had in the past provoked friction and which continued to offer constant possibilities of conflict. This last argument proved convincing, the more so as there was the question of the difference of religion, it being understood that a Russian princess would not change her faith and it would not do to allow a priest of the Greek Church to come between husband and wife.

It was therefore decided that the Archduchess Marie Louise should become Empress of France, and that the Queen of Naples was to go to the Austrian frontier to meet her.

The Prince of Neuchatel was sent to convey the Emperor's procuration to the Archduke Charles, who was to represent the Emperor of the French at the ceremonies in Vienna.

As for the Emperor his attention was entirely taken up by the thought of his young wife. It seemed as though he could never obtain enough details about her. Whenever a page or an aide-de-camp returned after taking a letter or a present to her, he would be overwhelmed with questions.

All agreed in saying that she had a good figure, was blonde, had a fresh complexion and a pretty foot, but no one dared claim that she was pretty. Monsieur de Talleyrand one day repeated to me one of these reports which a young aide-de-camp had made to the Emperor in his presence.

"Tell me frankly," said the Emperor, "how do you like Empress Marie Louise?" "Very much, Sire."

"Very much does not convey any information. Let me see. How tall is she?"

"Sire, she is about as tall as"---here he hesitated a moment and added—"as tall as the Queen of Holland."

"Ah, that is very nice. What color is her hair?"

"Blond, about like that of the Queen of Holland."

"Very well, and what sort of skin has she?"

"Very white."

"And her complexion?"

"Very clear, like that of the Queen of Holland."

"She looks like the Queen of Holland, does she?"

"No, Sire, she does not, and yet as regards everything you asked me, I answered truthfully."

The Emperor dismissed him, shook his head and said: "I have trouble making them say a word. I know that my wife must be very homely for not one of these young wretches has been able to say that she was pretty.

Well, as long as she is good-natured and bears me many sons, I shall love her as though she were the most beautiful woman on earth."

The choice of a chief lady in waiting for the new Empress was a question that caused much talk among all the courtiers.

She had to be a woman of absolutely irreproachable character. All the members of the oldest families of the Faubourg Saint-Germain claimed this position, which belonged to them by right.

They declared the niece of the unfortunate Queen of France [Marie Antoinette] could have as her close attendant only someone who had served the cause of her aunt.

On the other hand, the military men and the nobles of the new regime distrusted the members of the old court party and feared the snubbing they might receive from the old aristocrats.

The Emperor's choice was the wisest possible. No one had thought of it and everyone approved it. The Duchess of Montebello had, since the death of her husband [Marshal Lannes] lived in retirement, her only interest being the education of her children.

Admired by all, still young and beautiful, her appointment proved the Emperor did not forget those heroes who had died for their country's cause and that he did not want to place near his young wife any person whose reminiscences might have caused her not to like all French people equally.

Never before had such luxury been displayed as that which was to accompany the Emperor's marriage.

Nothing seemed too fine for the Empress, and the Emperor took pains over the smallest details of everything that concerned her as though he had nothing else to think about.

The King and Queen of Westphalia, the Queen of Spain, the King and Queen of Naples, the Duchess of Tuscany, the Prince and Princess of Baden, the Princess Pauline and my husband met in the evening at the Tuileries.

I spent my time between my mother and these gatherings, which the presence of my husband made rather embarrassing for me. At one of them which I happened to attend the Emperor was in especially high spirits.

"From now on," he declared, "people must find me charming. My serious and solemn manner will not please a young woman. She probably enjoys the pastimes of youth. Come, Hortense, you are our Terpsichore: teach me how to waltz."

The proposition of the Emperor struck us as so amazing that we burst out laughing. It was not a joke. He meant what he said seriously. I gave him lessons for two evenings. He had little natural skill and laughed himself at his clumsiness.

Pretty soon he grew tired of the idea saying: "Let each age do what suits it best. I am too old. Moreover, I can see that I was never meant to be a success as a dancer."

My brother had gone back to Italy, whence he was to return with his wife to attend the wedding. I received a letter from him which pained me deeply as it announced that General de Broc, who had participated in the German campaign under his orders, had fallen severely ill while at Milan.

I could not keep this bad news from my dear friend. She immediately left to nurse her beloved husband, but at Chambery she met my brother and my sister-in-law, who informed her of the General's death.

She was mad with grief. I shared her distress as though it had been my own. Never did I see a more deep or enduring sorrow. It did not, however, affect either her health or her beauty.

This doubtless was the happy result of the tears which she was able to shed freely. I had never met my sister-in-law before, but had been constantly hearing about her. The happiness she had brought my brother was enough in itself to make me fond of her.

I went to meet her on the way to Fontainebleau, and found her much as she had been described. Her beauty and the freshness of her complexion were remarkable. Although very tall and thin her figure was so well proportioned that she did not seem in the least grotesque.

She was always at ease and most considerate toward others. In every respect she made an ideal princess, and I have heard this opinion repeated by others, even by the Emperor himself.

We became sincerely attached to one another, as much so as two people can be who have common interests and the same reactions, but lack any knowledge of each other's early lives, which have been spent in different surroundings.

Nor can a person who has known only happiness understand another whose life has been darkened by constant misfortunes.

The Empress Josephine went to Navarre [a château near Evreux] in order not to be too close to Paris during the wedding festivities. According to our policy of appearing entirely to approve of the marriage, my brother and I had agreed to be present.

In order to do so we first went to Compiègne with the Emperor and all his family. The imperial court was at this time a remarkable spectacle.

Nowhere in Europe could be found a more numerous gathering of women distinguished by their beauty and intelligence. The Emperor's officers had married into all classes of society. They had been influenced neither by family nor by fortune but entirely by the personal qualities of their companions.

Italy and Germany had also contributed to the French court all they possessed in the way of charm, wit and beauty, for the princesses occupying foreign thrones sought to surround themselves with the elite of their new dominions. No assembly will ever compare, I believe, with this one as a picture of youth, riches, and all the forms of physical beauty and all the delights of the mind.

The Empress was approaching Compiegne. Every day the Emperor received a letter from her, which he seemed to find satisfactory.

Her passage everywhere was greeted with joyful demonstrations and she must have enjoyed this continuous ovation. As for me, yielding to my habit of judging others by myself, I found myself pitying her.

I remembered my own marriage, the ideas I had held as to the happiness it was to bring me. I thought she might hold these same ideas. How, I said to myself, can she, after having been brought up to hate the enemy of her family and of her country, expect to love the Emperor?

It is impossible. The match is a purely political one. I pictured her as being unhappy and thought of her as a victim.

She began to attract me and I found myself waiting for her arrival as one does for that of someone whom you look forward to meeting.

I did not remember sufficiently that for a princess ambition is the most powerful of all emotions and the highest throne is always the one to which she most ardently aspires.

She expects it will bring her the greatest happiness, since she knows in advance that her heart has nothing to say about choosing the man she marries.

It is a wise and necessary education that emphasizes the importance of the grandeur that lies before her and the noble use she may make of the power she will be called upon to wield; in other words, that teaches her how to make the most of what Fate holds in store for her.

At Compiegne, although my husband and I lived under the same roof, we saw each other only at night in the Emperor's drawing-room where all the family generally gathered.

He never spoke to me, and indeed I did not seem to be included in the subjects in which he was interested. One day the King of Westphalia sent me an invitation to lunch the following day.

I accepted and found myself with my husband and the King and Queen. I realized that the meeting had been planned in advance. The very thought of a possible discussion made me feel uneasy.

However, the ordeal had to be faced. The King and Queen left the room, and we were alone.

"Madame," said my husband, "for a long time I have been wishing to speak to you. The Emperor was unwilling to agree to a separation which we both desired.

Therefore, it appears you cannot be free of your husband."

"What happiness do you expect to find in a reconciliation?" I replied.

"I know there is no hope for one and it is not that I am asking. But you are Queen of Holland. It is there you should live, and I will not allow you to do otherwise."

"What reasons make you wish to have me there? If you are so alarmed at the idea of my being at the Emperor's court, I do not insist on remaining here. My mother lives in retirement. I am prepared to stay with her. I can do nothing to make you happy. Let me end my days quietly. Do not think any more about me. Imagine that I have died."

"That is quite different," he answered promptly. "Look at what the Emperor of Austria has done. He remarried immediately."

I do not know how this last sentence escaped him, but it strengthened my conviction that this love of his for me, which I had heard so much about, had ceased to exist.

In its place was another feeling so acutely hostile that I had reason to fear it. All his conversation was about the necessity of my returning to Holland and the power he possessed to make me do so. Later I was forced to resist the most pressing entreaties on the part of my husband's family. I replied to each of them that I believed he was capable of doing anything in order to hurt me, but that if he were not king of the country in which he lived I might be willing to go there in the hope of obtaining from some all-powerful judge at least a recognition of my rights. But what could I expect at the hands of a man who treated me as though I were his bitterest enemy?

I wrote the Emperor a despairing letter. He did not answer me.

Finally, even my brother undertook to patch up a partial truce. I related to him in detail all that I had endured. But how was I to make him understand? One must have lived through such tortures in order to conceive them. People fancy that emotion blinds persons who complain. In attempting to save their reputation perhaps one brings about their death.

Eugene kept repeating to me: "Make this last effort on account of what people will think. They do not know how many times already you have tried to improve this impossible character. You are blamed because people do not know you better. Show how brave you are, and if you cannot win from your husband a little domestic happiness, at least your perseverance will have given you the right to live alone, quiet and respected by all."

It is difficult to be so sure you are right as to be able to resist the advice of a dearly loved brother, especially when you value his approval, but in this case he was wrong.

He could not grasp that after all my vain attempts, which only I knew about, I had no health, strength, or hope left to enable me to try again. Thus, sunk in a state of dull discouragement, haunted by the constantly recurring idea that no one, not even those I was fondest of, cared what became of me, I finally gave my consent to this departure, which so many people desired.

I prepared to return to the spot where I had suffered so much, as a condemned man goes forward to his doom. My brother, who finally became uneasy when I ceased to make any objection to what was proposed, wished himself to establish the conditions under which I was to return to Holland.

It was agreed that I was to live under the same roof as my husband; he was to allow me to visit health resorts whenever necessary I was to be permitted to choose my own attendants, for none of my French ladies in waiting could accompany me. I obtained permission to leave my youngest child in Paris on account of his delicate constitution, and I made my preparations to leave immediately after the wedding, taking Madame de Boubers and Monsieur de Marmol with me.

My domestic troubles interested no one except myself. The entire court was taken up with the prospect of the coming festivities and the Empress's arrival. Many discussions took place between the kings and the princesses in regard to the proper ceremonial to be observed on her arrival.

I sometimes smiled to see so much importance being attached to matters which to me appeared to have so little. A heart that suffers realizes the futility of all material things. No decision had yet been arrived at, when the Emperor acted in a way of which everyone approved.

He left one morning in a barouche accompanied only by the King of Naples to drive out to meet the Empress. The meeting took place near Noyon. The Emperor stopped his carriage, stepped directly into that in which the Empress was seated and embraced her tenderly.

The Queen of Naples was with them. At seven o'clock in the evening we all took our places in full court dress at the bottom of the grand stairway to welcome the newcomer. We kissed her in turn, but hardly had a chance to do more than catch a glimpse of her as she passed.

After going through the gallery where all the local authorities and the court were assembled, she disappeared, and we did not see her again until the next morning.

She received us cordially. Her manner was gentle and kindly, although somewhat embarrassed. We were all pleased with her appearance.

The court then went to Saint Cloud, where the civil marriage took place on April 1.

A stately procession proceeded from there to the Tuileries. I was with the Queen of Spain and the Grand Duke of Württemberg. We preceded the Emperor's carriage. I shall not describe the scene. The contemporary newspapers have probably done so.

During the Empire the public ceremonies were always impressive and beautiful. The Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile, already begun, had provisionally been completed in wood.

It was easy to imagine the magnificent effect it would later have produced. Along the way the crowds seemed to me rather reserved. The common people did not display much pleasure at seeing an Austrian woman again on the throne.

On the other hand Paris society, which had mustered in full force in the gallery of the Louvre, gave way to the most lively enthusiasm, some of its number because they recalled old and dear memories, others because they hoped the marriage would insure a lasting peace, or because they were stirred by that emotion which any spectacular and brilliant sight can arouse.

Before proceeding to the temporary chapel, the Emperor and Empress rested in their apartments. The imperial mantles were brought from Notre Dame where they had been kept since the coronation.

The Empress put on the one which my mother had worn, and the Queen of Spain, the Queen of Westphalia, the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, the Princess Pauline and I carried the train. The Queen of Naples, the wife of the Viceroy of Italy, and the Princess of Baden marched ahead bearing the candles and different insignia.

In this order we passed through the gallery and arrived at the room which had been arranged as a temporary chapel.

The court and the diplomatic corps were in stands erected around the walls. The ceremony was rather short. The spectators frequently glanced at my brother and me, trying to see what our impression was.

This movement of curiosity embarrassed me although I knew that no emotion would betray itself on my features. Indeed, I sincerely believed that my mother was happier in her quiet retreat than surrounded with all this pomp.

I could not regret for her sake what I personally did not envy. My husband left after the marriage, sending me word by Madame de Boubers that he was preceding me but that he counted on my keeping my promise.

Madame de Boubers told me that as he was going away his sisters had tried to persuade him to take his son, who happened to be present, with him, but that he had refused, saying: "The Queen has given me her promise. She will not break it."

I was grateful to him for this token of confidence. While I was making my final preparation for my journey, Madame de Broc, overcoming her own grief, hurried to see me. "What is this I hear?" she

exclaimed. "You are going back to Holland? Do you want to die? I who so often urged you to fulfil your duties no matter how disagreeable they might be, I now implore you to relinquish all such ideas. Do not let your despair lead you to sacrifice yourself to such an extent."

She guessed how discouraged I was and knew that for some time I had not been telling her my troubles in order not to add to hers.

"I have given my promise, my dear Adele." This was all I could say and we separated overwhelmed with grief.

Monsieur de Flahaut had been ill in Vienna after the war for a long time. He was still far from well since his return and made a great effort in order to come to see me as soon as he heard what I intended to do.

His tears, his profound distress, his renewed declarations of eternal devotion, everything about the way in which he bade me farewell betrayed a depth of feeling which I still refused to admit, and this affection in spite of myself made me still cling to life and regret my courage, since the latter, which enabled me to leave Paris, at the same time hastened a certain and speedy death.

My mother was at Navarre. I did not have the strength to go and see her. I wrote her. I cannot tell whether in my letter she felt how completely I was surrendering myself to my fate, but she was unhappy and uneasy over the decision I had made.

I went to Compiègne. The Emperor was utterly absorbed by his new wife. The princes and princesses, yielding to the appeal of amusements, dances, and all those tumultuous pleasures which found expression there, spent their time trying to outshine one another in popularity, magnificence, and pomp. The whole court was making merry.

I alone was sad, an alien to all my surroundings. My wretchedness made me stand aside in the midst of all these festivities. Their noise and sparkle only rendered my misery more acute and deepened its somber glow.

The Emperor's sisters, now that I was at last on the point of going away, took more pains to make themselves agreeable to me than they generally did.

They did not need actually to say to me: "Be brave." Their highly satisfied air was sufficient to prevent my pride from giving any sign of my distress. But if one of them had gone so far as to press my hand affectionately, I should not have been able to stand it, and my tears would have betrayed my hidden anguish.

At last it was necessary to bid the Emperor and Empress farewell. I wept as I did so. The Emperor seemed touched by the sight of my tears. "Why are you leaving so soon?" he inquired.

I did not reply and hurried to my carriage without seeing anybody. My son and Madame de Boubers were my only companions. As we left Compiegne I breathed more freely. I had no longer to curb my emotions, and this was a relief after all the disagreeable things I had lately been forcing myself to do.

The journey was a mournful one. It seems as though the only pleasure a soul in pain can feel is the memory of what it has passed through already. When I caught sight of the Dutch guard waiting at the frontier I recalled my earlier journey; then I had thought I deserved to be pitied.

Nothing had changed. I was again on the same spot, but on the former occasion I had had my son. Now he had ceased to live; and what sort of existence remained for me? Superstitious ideas always occur to one in connection with any deep sorrow.

I felt I was about to die and a funeral we encountered at the entrance to the first village convinced me of the fact. I reached Utrecht.

My arrival had not been announced. The King was at Amsterdam. Madame de Boubers went off to put my child to bed.

For three hours I remained alone. How sad my thoughts were! The feeble candle which the doorkeeper had brought me went out on the chimney without my noticing that it had burned low.

For a moment I remained in total darkness and became terrified. The next day the King arrived. He was overjoyed to see his son again but paid little or no attention to me.

I received the principal persons of the city, and my pallor was so great, the change in my appearance so extraordinary, that everyone looked at me with pity and sympathy.

I continued on to Amsterdam. There public opinion had been aroused against me. I was said to be still young and attractive, interested only in the pleasures of Paris and despising the country over which my children would someday rule.

As soon as I appeared, however, this hostility was transformed into a lively and favorable solicitude as to my health. Even the common people exclaimed with an expressive gesture and with evidence of emotion:

"Our poor Queen!" The authorities called on me. I requested the prayers of each of the religious persuasions. Several clergymen in making their addresses showed signs of an emotion which astonished me.

Later I asked Abbe Bertrand the reason for this. He replied that when they arrived, they had heard very unfavorable reports about me, but my appearance had touched them, they had regretted their unjust opinion and announced publicly that they had been deceived.

The Palace of Amsterdam, formerly the City Hall, was very handsome outside. The King had added many new decorations, but no dwelling could have been more depressing inside.

My drawing-room, previously the criminal court, was decorated with a frieze of skulls in black and white marble. No one had thought of removing this ornamentation, which was much admired.

The hallways were gloomy; my rooms looked out toward a church, they smelled bad, and when a window was opened a heavy odor of sulphur rose from the near-by canal.

My Dutch ladies in waiting seemed pleasant enough, but they were strangers to me; most of them had been recently appointed. The result was that I spent my mornings alone, reading in my room.

I hardly ever saw my son. Word would be sent me when dinner was ready that the King was waiting for me. While we were at the table, he would scarcely say a word.

After the meal the King would thrum on the piano, which stood open. He would take his son on his knees, kiss him and lead him out on the balcony which overlooked the square.

The crowd, catching sight of them, would give a few cheers. The King would reenter the room, return to the piano, recite some French poetry or hum an air.

I would stay in an armchair, not saying a word and watching what went on in the room. When a few hours had passed, my husband, becoming conscious of the strained situation, would ring and send for the Dutch members of our household and the ladies in waiting.

Card-tables would be brought out. Sometimes I played also and at nine o'clock I returned to my apartments after having said good night, the only word we had spoken to one another.

This is an exact picture of how I spent my days at Amsterdam. Thus, I was less unhappy, less actively tormented than I had been, but my strength continued to fail and I had lost all my former energy.

This state of loneliness in a foreign country filled me with terror. Death, the thought of which had previously attracted me, now presented itself under terrifying aspects. "What am I doing here?" I asked myself. "Is it possible that I may die here far from my native land, without a loving hand to soothe my last moments, without being able to address a fond fare-well to those I love? Why did they let me go? And why did I myself decide to come?"

I only had one aim in life—to escape from this country and regain my freedom. The only form of amusement I could find was in reading novels of the most horrifying sort.

The works of Ann Radcliffe were very useful to me in this respect. It was impossible for me to fix my mind on anything serious. In order to obtain a moment's respite, I was obliged to interest myself in these haunting tales and imagine the horrors described there were such as were happening around me.

The palace became in my mind the stronghold of the Inquisition.

Within its walls no one dared utter a word everyone was terrified. When the Abbe Bertrand came to see me I quickly dismissed him for fear of getting him in trouble. In short, I felt myself wasting away day by day, and the memory of my former misery together with my present state of loneliness combined to fill me with the gloomiest of thoughts.

I cannot better describe my condition than by copying a letter I wrote Madame de Broc and which I sent her by one of my brother's aides-de-camp:

"Here I am at Amsterdam, my dear Adele, alone, utterly alone. Who is there who can understand me now that you are so far away? I admit that this loneliness and the meager affection I seem to inspire in those about me are beginning to terrify me.

What if I were to die here, deprived of all loving care? In spite of myself this idea comes frequently to my mind. I need only look at myself in the glass to see how little it would take to kill me. When I agreed to carry out my family's wishes my courage was greater than my strength. You who knew everything that awaited me, you alone tried to dissuade me. I did as they asked me. The King wished to have me near him. I wonder why. I came, but what a life I lead! I hardly ever see my son. I know he is being spoiled. The thought hurts me. I can do nothing to prevent it. God's will be done. Poor Abbe Bertrand came to see me. He encouraged me by describing how public opinion has changed toward me.

In spite of all the slanders that had been spread, people said: "Can this woman, whom we see apparently with only a short time to live, be that person who was described to us as so gay, so devoted to amusements of all kinds, who hated Holland? We have been deceived."

See, Adele, how something good comes of it when we sacrifice ourselves, when we do what we think is best. The palace here is like a chamber of the Inquisition. No one dares speak. Everyone trembles. I quickly dismissed the abbe for fear of getting him into trouble if I kept him with me too long, for I am not allowed to see anyone. My trouble is no longer one that can be dissipated by the laughter of youth.

How far away those days seem. The most terrible thing about a deep sorrow is that it renders you more sensitive to every gloomy thought. Every incident that occurs has its repercussion in a heart that is already wounded. All my surroundings recall to me what I formerly suffered. That same smell of peat comes in through the windows and the calls of the night watchman, which I heard as I watched beside my child's bedside, still ring in my ears.

Ah, my dear Adele, I do not fear death if it will unite us once more. But I feel that I sadden you. Console yourself. At least I am quiet in my mind and in agreeing to come here I

resigned myself to what might follow. Now I can at least weep alone. It is a solace for me. You remember that formerly to do so was considered a crime.

You too weep, but you are surrounded by the affection of your family. It is love that makes us live and it is that which I miss the most here. You think of me sometimes, do you not, my dear Adele, in spite of your grief? Think how much I need you. At least I hope that we may be allowed to live together and by mingling our sorrows make them less bitter. Take care of your health.

Health is necessary in order to be brave, and we need so much courage to keep on living. Yesterday I received all the official authorities. I could not resist asking for the prayers of the different religions.

Several persons when they made their addresses appeared deeply moved, and the abbe has explained to me since that they arrived quite hostile to me on account of what they had been told, but that for some reason, I cannot say what, when they saw me they realized the mistake they had made and declared they had been deceived and had done wrong to form an opinion without having met me.

Poor people. I forgive them. It was so natural they should be mistaken. Everything had been done to make them misjudge me. But then why insist I return here? It certainly must be for some political reason which I cannot understand. But, farewell. I have relieved my heart and it has done me good. You are the only person to whom I can do so. Calm your own grief in order I may be able to combat mine.

(signed) HORTENSE."

My brother, who worried about my health, sent me one of his aides-de-camp. He took a long time to reach me. No one dared to come near my apartment to announce that he had arrived. I told him to reassure my brother. I was too much touched by Eugene's kindness to increase his anxieties in telling him about my poor health and low spirits.

French troops, under some pretext or other, entered Holland. The King in order to preserve the independence of his country sacrificed considerable territory to the demands of France.

In spite of this he found himself constantly at odds with the Emperor, and the tone of their private correspondence was embittered by their political differences.

My husband thought that a letter from me would help persuade the Emperor to withdraw the troops, whose presence might affect the popularity of my children.

I did as he wished. But I received no answer. In the meanwhile, the heavy air of Amsterdam increased my weakness. I was only able to breathe by having vinegar constantly burned in the room.

My husband's French physician became alarmed to see me so ill. "Madame," he declared, "your condition is serious. If I say so, people will not believe me. I beg you to call in the principal Dutch doctor. It is absolutely necessary for you to have a change of air, and he is the only one who can convince the King."

Like his French colleague the Dutch doctor found me in very poor health. I do not know what he may have told the King, but I heard no more about the matter.

I was convinced that if I stayed any longer where I was I should die and, as I have just said, death under such conditions, utterly alone, without anyone to console me, without anyone to comfort me was a terrible thought. But how was I to leave?

I could not do so without the King's permission. My husband went to Haarlem to spend a few days with his son. I remained more alone than ever in this vast place. One night I heard the report of artillery.

I called my attendants. They agreed with me that what we heard was the sound of cannon. It was midnight. Why should the guns be fired at such a time of night? Perhaps the English were attempting a surprise attack, perhaps they were going to capture Amsterdam.

Is it possible to believe that this idea caused me to feel happy? How wretched one must be when the idea of changing prisons and masters makes one rejoice!

May my children, my friends, forgive me for having felt this way. It was the only egotistic thought I ever had; and was it not a natural one considering that I felt myself dying and thought everyone had deserted me? The noise still One of my maids woke up a servant. The latter went to the hail on the second floor in order to get a better idea from where the cannon was firing, and discovered that a window had been left open.

This window kept slamming from time to time, and it was this noise echoing through the great corridors which we had thought was the booming of cannon. I smiled at my mistake but blushed at the thought of the joy it had given me.

I again began to brood over my sad lot in order to find an excuse for my unhappiness. I was allowed to have only one interview with the French Ambassador, and that conversation took place in the presence of my ladies in waiting and the officers attached to my official household.

I had asked him to tell me if what Monsieur de Broc had reported regarding the King's instructions to Monsieur Van Maanen, his minister, to spread slanderous reports of my conduct was true.

The ambassador confirmed the report and even added that Monsieur Van Maanen was prepared to sign a statement to that effect. Meanwhile my health grew steadily worse.

I felt that unless I had the courage to ask permission to go away I should in a short time not have enough strength to go. The terror with which my husband inspired me was still so acute that I hardly dared ask him a question.

I finally ventured to do so. I told him that the air of Amsterdam was killing me and reminded him of his promise to allow me to go and take the waters whenever the doctors prescribed scribed them for me.

He made many objections, but it was finally decided that I might go to the Chateau of Loo in Holland, where the air would be better than what I was breathing at the time.

The idea of leaving my son behind pained me, but I felt reassured as to his health since I left Madame de Boubers to take care of him. Loo was for me like Amsterdam. I felt that my only salvation was in those happy hills where my bright youth had been spent and whose air was what I so dearly desired.

I wrote the King that I could no longer put off trying this cure which had in the past proved so beneficial. He did not dare to refuse me, but replied by a long letter in which he spoke of the future of my children in Holland and of our duty to keep this country for them to reign over.

I did not at that time understand very much what he was writing about, for I was unaware of the fact that the discussions between the two brothers had reached a point where my husband was afraid that Holland would lose her independence.

I left with two of my Dutch ladies in waiting and two of my equerries, Monsieur de Renesse and Monsieur de Marmol. As I drew nearer France, I felt that I was being restored to life. Everything stirred my emotions. The first custom-house officials we encountered made my heart beat faster because they spoke my language.

The first hill I caught sight of made tears come to my eyes. Yet I feared I should not be strong enough to reach my goal. I felt so weak. If I had been inclined to have any illusions about my appearance the alarm of those about me, the words uttered involuntarily by the people that came to catch a glimpse of me while our horses were being changed would have made me realize what a condition I was in.

"Ah, how ill she looks! She must be dying."

"If only I can reach Plombieres," I said to myself, "I shall be saved." Finally, I arrived but only to see my illness become more acute due to an inflammation of the chest and an expectoration of blood.

My own doctor and Mademoiselle Cochelet came from Paris. Careful nursing, my youth, a greater peace of mind were what restored me to life.

Madame de Broc hastened to me. She was still inconsolable for the loss of her husband, about whom she kept talking to me, and her grief, which I shared so intimately, increased my fever. My doctor insisted that she return to Paris in order not to hamper my convalescence.

It was absolutely necessary that I should rest. Yet constantly something came up that prevented my being quiet. From Paris I received letters giving horrible details regarding the fire that had taken place during a reception given for the Empress Marie Louise by the Prince of Schwarzenberg.

My family, my friends had been in danger, and the account of this terrible accident became a real danger in itself for me, so keen was the emotion it aroused in my enfeebled condition. Immediately afterwards a messenger brought me word that the King had abdicated the throne of Holland and I had been named Regent in accordance with the constitution.

Real anxiety as regards what had happened to the King was my first reaction. No one knew where he had retired.

I imagined that he had left for America, alone, with no one to help him, no one to console him. His fate aroused my sympathy. I almost came to believe that I had become fond of him, now that he had known misfortune.

I wrote the Emperor, seeking to calm his resentment against my husband and asking him to help the latter even though he might be angry with him. I received several messages to the effect that he intended to annex Holland and telling me what I should reply to the various legislative bodies whose delegate the Baron von Spaen came to inform me of my appointment as Regent.

The Emperor's letters contained severe reproaches in regard to my husband's conduct. Frequently a single word summed up an incident, and his irritation showed itself in the violence of his expressions. For instance, he said, "The King went away leaving his son utterly destitute."

I should have understood that the phrase was dictated by his irritation, but it touched me at my most sensitive point. The tense state of my nerves, the strain resulting from the continual arrival of messengers combined to inspire me with the most gloomy thoughts.

I was haunted by the idea that my son was alone, without anyone to care for him. I forgot the throne which he still occupied and thought only of his complete isolation and my inability to help him.

The moment I received news of what was happening I sent Monsieur de Marmol to bring the child to me. But the Emperor had acted first. One of his aides-de-camp, Monsieur de Lauriston, brought the boy to Saint Cloud after he had reigned for a week, having already received the oaths of

allegiance from the various branches of the government before the union of Holland and France was announced.

I heard that my husband had left the Palace of Haarlem with the utmost secrecy accompanied by the general commanding the royal guard.

The general was a Frenchman, formerly an officer in my husband's old regiment of dragoons. He owed his promotion to my husband and was prepared to sacrifice his future on his behalf. The King had become aware that it was the Emperor's first intention to unite Holland to France.

The French armies dominated the country. It was impossible to think of opposing them. He therefore decided to withdraw. I cannot blame him for such a decision. On the contrary it is always a noble act to give up a throne on conscientious grounds.

Only I, who had never taken part in public affairs, could not help resenting the fact that I should have been forced to return to Holland in order to further his political schemes.

I received word that he had arrived at the resort of Toplitz. The only thing that prevented me from obeying my first impulse and hastening to him was the feeling that I was unable to help him in any way and the fear that my presence would recall the memories of a past when he had been unhappy.

Had I thought it was in my power to console him, I should not have hesitated. I should have put aside even the sacred interests of my children. But being convinced that my efforts would be useless, I felt that to go to my husband would be merely to appear to act generously toward him in the eyes of the world, and in reality, not better in any way the condition of the man for whom I was making this sacrifice.

One of my maids woke up a servant. The latter went to the hail on the second floor in order to get a better idea from where the cannon was firing, and discovered that a window had been left open.

This window kept slamming from time to time, and it was this noise echoing through the great corridors which we had thought was the booming of cannon. I smiled at my mistake but blushed at the thought of the joy it had given me.

I again began to brood over my sad lot in order to find an excuse for my unhappiness. I was allowed to have only one interview with the French Ambassador, and that conversation took place in the presence of my ladies in waiting and the officers attached to my official household.

I had asked him to tell me if what Monsieur de Broc had reported regarding the King's instructions to Monsieur Van Maanen, his minister, to spread slanderous reports of my conduct was true.

The ambassador confirmed the report and even added that Monsieur Van Maanen was prepared to sign a statement to that effect. Meanwhile my health grew steadily worse.

I felt that unless I had the courage to ask permission to go away I should in a short time not have enough strength to go. The terror with which my husband inspired me was still so acute that I hardly dared ask him a question.

I finally ventured to do so. I told him that the air of Amsterdam was killing me and reminded him of his promise to allow me to go and take the waters whenever the doctors prescribed them for me.

He made many objections, but it was finally decided that I might go to the Chateau of Loo in Holland, where the air would be better than what I was breathing at the time.

The idea of leaving my son behind pained me, but I felt reassured as to his health since I left Madame de Boubers to take care of him. Loo was for me like Amsterdam. I felt that my only salvation was in those happy hills where my bright youth had been spent and whose air was what I so dearly desired.

I wrote the King that I could no longer put off trying this cure which had in the past proved so beneficial. He did not dare to refuse me, but replied by a long letter in which he spoke of the future of my children in Holland and of our duty to keep this country for them to reign over.

I did not at that time understand very much what he was writing about, for I was unaware of the fact that the discussions between the two brothers had reached a point where my husband was afraid that Holland would lose her independence.

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The Memoirs of Queen Hortense

CHAPTER X

THE QUEEN HORTENSE : IN THE DAYS OF MARIE-LOUISE: THE KING OF ROME (1810-1812)

Visit to Switzerland—Aix-en-Savoie—The Duchesse de Montebello—Pauline—The Fate of Louis—The Queen's Household—Monsieur de Flahaut Again—At the Emperor's Court—The Duc de Rovigo—The Birth and Baptism of the King of Rome—Caroline—Two Balls in February, 1812—A Man Who Loved a Queen.

MY mother was at the springs of Aix-les-Bains and urged me to join her there. She did not conceal her satisfaction at seeing me at last entirely free and independent, thanks to my husband's departure.

My physician, who was extremely worried about my lungs, forbade my going to Plombieres and thought that only sulphur springs could stop the progress of a disease which recent events had aggravated.

Switzerland was a country I was anxious to become acquainted with. From all the descriptions of it I had heard I imagined it must be a peaceful spot where one could be quiet and happy.

The simple life of the inhabitants, the grandeur and impressive beauties of the land-scape, the limited horizon which seemed to place a barrier between us and the evils of the outer world, all caused me to feel that here was a place where one could find that ideal felicity I had long ago abandoned all hope of ever encountering.

Aix-en-Savoie lay so close to the frontier of this beautiful country that I could not resist the temptation to enter it. I sent all my traveling carriages along the French road that leads through Geneva.

I and half my household in absolute incognito—for fear of incurring the anger of the Emperor, who would not have granted me permission to leave French soil—followed the highway that leads to Besancon, Pontarlier and Lausanne.

I was so weak that two servants were obliged to carry me in a little specially constructed chair whenever the road became too tiring. In one of these excursions I noticed a sort of hut which I thought was uninhabited.

It was placed between two trees and exposed to the wind and rain. Nevertheless, I entered. An old man was sitting there on a wooden chair, all alone; his legs were covered with straw and he appeared completely destitute.

He told me he was nearly a hundred years old, that he had taken part in the Battle of Fontenoy and lived there on such alms as the travelers happened to bestow. My first impulse was to put an end at once to his misery. I was on the point of giving him a considerable sum of money when I suddenly

stopped.

Entire relief coming unexpectedly might prove too great a shock. Therefore, I sent for wine to be brought from my carriage.

As I fed it to him myself, spoonful by spoonful, I added to the heap of napoleons which I placed in his hand.

Finally, his joy became so keen that he was seized with a terrible fit of palsy, and I burst into tears, fearing that my charity would result in the death of this unhappy being. I can still recall the details of this touching scene. My servants and my postilions, out of curiosity, had deserted the carriages.

Like me each of them felt a hitherto unknown emotion. Usually it is misfortune that arouses one's sympathy. In this case it was joy that proved terrifying. I was still standing beside this poor old man when we saw his wife, who was seventy years old, appear with some fruit which she had secured for him.

She seemed, at first, to be better able to bear the sudden change in their fortunes than her husband. But the poor mother at the sight of the miracle that had taken place imagined anything was possible and even thought I could work as many more as I pleased.

She told me about her son, from whom she had had no news since he had taken part in the siege of Toulon twenty years before, and implored me to tell her what had become of him. I could only promise to make inquiries.

This promise was enough to soothe her maternal anxiety. After she had asked me many questions I withdrew, satisfied at having discovered that a single unfulfilled desire is enough to dampen too intense a joy.

Thus, grief returns to sadden us even in the midst of our happiness. It seems as though our soul must always retain insatiable longing, which nothing can appease. Perfect content can never be attained, utter grief is all we are capable of experiencing.

The former is always above us, just beyond our grasp; the latter never leaves our side. I arrived at Geneva, having already benefited somewhat from the pure mountain air and the beauties of the scenery.

My lodgings were outside the town at the little village of Le Secheron. I was still very weak and weary. In vain I tried to rest in my rooms and finally I joined my ladies in waiting in the garden of Monsieur Heutsch, which was next to the inn.

They were talking with several unknown gentlemen who, seeing they were strangers, were describing the surrounding country to them. When I appeared, the general attention turned to me.

One of the gentlemen, a kind and obliging man, looked at me attentively. Seeing how ill I was, he at once began to speak of the beneficial effects of the Swiss climate. He assured me it would do me good.

He owed his own life partly to the excellence of the climate, partly to the care of one of his friends, a skilful physician whom he pointed out to me, strolling about a short distance off.

Thereupon, without waiting for me to reply the stranger hurried off and returned with the doctor. The latter stepped up to me and said, with a penetrating glance, "How long have you been ill? Just what is the trouble?"

I thought he was asking, "What are the sorrows which are shortening your days?" For it was my sorrows which lay at the root of my illness, and to speak of the latter was to remind me of the former.

The only answer I could make was to burst into tears. The sympathetic interest of the stranger who had brought the doctor to me increased at the sight of my distress.

Deeply moved he took my arm, offered to look after me, urged me to seek amusement, pointed out the beauties of the lake. Seeing Monsieur Heutsch standing in the doorway of his home he introduced me without asking my permission as a foreign visitor and made me go into the house, where that day there happened to be a fairly numerous gathering.

I made no effort to resist. I was too deeply moved to be able to speak. The doctor kept watching me in order to discover what was the cause of my illness. My ladies followed us silently, not venturing to reveal my incognito.

In order to conceal my too clearly visible emotion as I entered the drawing-room I bowed and, walking over to the piano, picked up a piece of music.

"It is a new romance," said my host. "It was written by the Queen of Holland. My niece sings it very well." She proceeded to do so, and the self-assurance of the performer made me quite sure that she had no idea the author was beside her.

I was about to withdraw and return to the inn when we heard sounds of music on the lake. I was obliged to yield once more to the insistence of my host and the gentleman who had introduced me and go to meet the new arrivals.

I cannot say whether it was because of my embarrassment, my fatigue or the effect of the music on my nerves, but my tears continued to flow abundantly. The more ashamed I was to weep, the less I was able to stop.

The new arrivals, who had come from Geneva, left their boat, and one of them having doubtless recognized me, people began to whisper to one another. Finally my name reached the ears of the gentleman who had remained with me and who, so anxious was he to make himself agreeable, had offered me a dinner in the country for the next day, to be followed by a boating party and all the other

pleasures one may enjoy in the suburbs of Geneva.

Immediately he let go my arm. His embarrassed manner, his evident fear of having displeased me showed me that my incognito had been broken. But without giving the party time to make sure that it was really I whom they had been entertaining I took advantage of a moment's liberty and hurried back to the inn, letting the others go on to Geneva.

That evening I felt so ill that I was obliged to send for the same doctor who a few hours before had been asked to diagnose my case. I did not need to enter into any explanations as in order to have the gates of the town opened to allow the doctor to come to where I was I had been obliged to give my name.

The next morning, feeling a little better and wishing to make up for my abrupt departure on the preceding day and to return all the politeness that had been shown me although my identity had been unknown, I sent word to my neighbor that I was postponing my departure so as to take advantage of his kind offer of a luncheon party for me and my ladies.

At luncheon people were tactful enough to appear not to have recognized me. But in addition to their previous attentions they added a respectful manner which made it perfectly clear that they knew who I was. I explained my tears as well as I could.

The ballad was sung over again at my request but this time with a distinct shyness. At noon I left to meet my mother. I had just passed the first posting-house when, some distance off, I caught sight of two horsemen dashing toward me at full speed.

When our minds are full of some particular person we fancy that we see him everywhere, and if we do happen to meet him we believe our intuition has been correct. That was why at the sight of one of the approaching horsemen I exclaimed,

"I was right, it is he." My heart beat violently, but I hid my emotion and displayed only surprise when Monsieur de Flahaut and Monsieur de Pourtale, my mother's equerry, appeared beside my carriage.

The former was staying at Aix, taking the waters there on account of his health, the latter accompanied my mother. She had sent them ahead to meet me and was waiting for me a little farther on.

A few moments later I was in her arms. How marvelous it is to exchange agitation for calm, loneliness for tender affection!

But to bear either grief or happiness one must have strength, and mine was exhausted. If a storm came up my nerves were on edge; I conjured up a thousand imaginary phantoms.

The sight of Monsieur de Flahaut, who spent his days with us, provoked an emotion which became steadily more and more difficult to conceal. It was more than my feeble health could bear.

For the first time since I knew that I loved him, I now saw him constantly. If he devoted himself to me, I felt extremely embarrassed; if he was gay and attentive with the young ladies who were with us, an indescribable feeling of bitterness and shame filled my heart.

I wished to conquer all my emotion. All I could do was to retire to my room to weep, blaming my weakness and blushing to find in my soul instead of a calm friendship all the torments of love. My eyes constantly swam with tears in spite of my mother's tender solicitude and that of those about her. Everything revolved about me.

The first thing everyone inquired about was my health, the most important thing in the world was to find something that amused me, to keep something from me that might upset me. At last I came to consider that my life must be worth something because so many other people seemed to think it precious.

What more did I need to make me happy? I have always remembered this quiet month as the happiest time I ever knew. But how could I enjoy it in the midst of those inner conflicts, which were more than my feeble health could bear and which absorbed all my energy?

The account of the danger which my mother had been in on the Lac du Bourget the day before I arrived made me tremble. She had left Aix to visit the Abbey of Hautecombe. The weather had been fine when she left, but on her return a storm had come up while she was in the middle of the lake.

The wreaths and extra canvas hangings with which the vessel had been adorned in her honor added to her danger, as they offered more resistance to the wind. It seemed certain that the boat would sink.

Monsieur de Flahaut and Monsieur de Poutales had already made their preparations for rescuing her in case the ship went down. All the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, aware of the Empress's danger, had gathered on the shores and awaited some opportunity to come to her aid.

By the exercise of great courage and skill the crew managed to weather the storm. The vessel arrived safely in port, and a kind Providence spared me the horrible misfortune which had threatened me.

Monsieur de Flahaut's very brief leave of absence expired. He returned to Paris. My mother made a little trip into Switzerland while I remained alone at Aix.

The waters were so excellent for my chest and so good for my general health that had it not been for my children I should have still further prolonged my stay. The Emperor wrote me to come back to Paris to be with my children.

My mother, whom I visited at Geneva, was sorry to see me leave. She feared the Emperor, as he never wrote her, wished to have her stay out of France. She had bought the estate called Pregny, on the edge of the lake.

But although it was very attractive nothing could take the place of her own country and her beloved Malmaison. Letters from certain people who always wish to meddle in the affairs of others advised her to settle in Italy with her son.

She asked me to find out what the Emperor thought of this plan. For the first time the idea occurred to her that she might be in the way, and that the Emperor might abandon her. This thought pained her deeply.

I arrived at Fontainebleau where all the court had assembled. My children were waiting for me there. The evening I arrived the Emperor came to see me with the Empress. He showed her to me with an air of satisfaction.

"Look at her figure," he said. "If it is a girl it will be a little wife for your son Napoleon, for she must not go out of France or marry outside the family.

Naturally we could not speak of my mother that evening. I asked him to receive me the following morning. When I talked with him, I felt how pleased he would be if my mother of her own accord decided to live with her son in Italy.

"I am obliged to think of my wife's happiness," he said to me. "Things have not developed as I hoped they would. She is alarmed by your mother's attractiveness and the hold people know she has on me. I know this for a fact.

Recently I wished to go out with my wife to Malmaison. I do not know whether she thought your mother was there, but she began to cry, and I was obliged to turn around and go somewhere else.

However, whatever happens I shall never oblige the Empress Josephine to do anything she does not want to do. I shall always remember the sacrifices she made for me. If she wishes to settle at Rome, I shall have her appointed governor of the city. At Brussels she could hold a brilliant court and at the same time do good to the country. It would be still better and more suitable if she were to go and live with her son and grandchildren.

But write her that if she prefers to return to Malmaison I shall do nothing to prevent her." I assured the Emperor that to return was the only course she desired to follow, and my mother arrived shortly afterwards.

A little later I gave the Emperor a message from her to the effect that having been his wife and Empress of the French she no longer wished for any other title, that all she desired was the right to live and die in her country, surrounded by her friends.

Since my return from Aix the Emperor had made a point of treating me with special favor. Sometimes he would say to me:

"Come and see my wife. Sketch with her. Play the piano and sing with her. She would be delighted to have you do so and does not dare to ask you herself." I was too familiar with social etiquette not to realize that it should have been the Empress who invited me.

Moreover, it was neither natural nor polite for me to attempt to become intimate with her. The result was that she and I always remained on good terms because I never tried to force myself on her.

Like everyone else I called in the evening, and she always paid more attention to me than she did to my sisters-in-law. Sometimes she even spoke to me about quite intimate matters. One day, for instance, she told me how, when her marriage had been decided on, Monsieur de Metternich in accordance with the instruction of the Emperor of Austria wished to tell her about the different persons with whom she was to live.

He said that the Princess Pauline was the most beautiful person in the world, the Queen of Naples the wittiest, but that Queen Hortense was the only one she could really make a friend of.

I was flattered to hear of this distinction in my favor and especially that she should tell me so herself. On all occasions I proved that I was devoted to her, and she always showed her interest in me, but her only close friend remained her lady in waiting [Marechale Lannes, Duchesse de Montebello].

For the latter the Empress had a sort of adoration, which seemed strange to many people, but which anyone who can read the secrets of human nature can easily enough understand.

A princess from her birth is surrounded by honors and attentions. Everyone seeks her company, studies her tastes, seeks to foresee and fulfil her desires. She is accustomed to treat everyone on the same footing, everyone is alike to her, pleases her or bores her equally, because everyone acts in the same manner toward her. But if a person with whom she is constantly in contact appears to be interested in other things, other pleasures than those in which she shares, then the princess like those coquettes who, always sure of pleasing, only notice the men who pay no attention to them will be surprised and hurt at this person's indifference.

A woman of a retiring nature is not likely to be either a flatterer or an intrigant. The wish to recapture this rebel, to subjugate her, occupies the mind of the princess as much as a serious affection might do and sometimes creates such an affection.

This was the situation between the Empress and the Duchesse de Montebello. The latter disliked life at court. Since the death of her husband, life at home, the education of her children, the company of a few friends were enough to make her happy.

Far from seeking to hide the regrets her prominent position caused her she seemed to take pride in exposing them. Consequently, the moment she was absent the Empress would send her little notes. She could not do without her.

The friends of the Duchess were the only French people the Empress really knew although she never saw them. She knew everything they did. At New Year's the Empress's great task was to choose attractive presents for the children of the Duchess.

Madame de Montesquiou, the governess of the King of Rome, was jealous on his account. But the most extraordinary part of the whole matter was the slanderous rumor that people repeated, and that never had the least foundation in fact, namely that the Emperor cared for the Duchess. On the contrary they disliked one another, and it needed all the Emperor's strong sense of justice not to resent the strong influence another person wielded over his wife's mind. I have several times heard him say to the Empress: "You are making a great mistake if you think that the Duchess cares for you. The only persons she cares about are herself and her children. You are silly to become so attached to her."

Nevertheless, he always put up with her, always was courteous, and did everything he could to have her treated with that respect to which she was entitled as a woman of high moral character and a friend to his wife.

In spite of all her qualities, it must be admitted that the Duchesse de Montebello was not the right person for her post as chief lady in waiting, perhaps because she did not take the trouble to be.

She never bothered to inquire as to the position and rank of the persons introduced to the Empress and what should be done or avoided in connection with them.

As a foreigner, entirely ignorant of the environment in which she found herself, the Empress frequently made mistakes, natural and excusable enough but such as society is not prepared to forgive in an Empress.

Often, for instance, she would inquire about a husband's health from a wife who had just lost him on the field of battle and who with tears in her eyes was obliged to relate the story of the misfortune for which she had hoped to be consoled.

The Emperor's family, not without surprise, found that the Empress was inclined to keep them at a distance. My mother had always been ready to receive them and always treated them cordially.

It was she who was constantly asked to say something or secure a favor which they did not venture to ask for themselves. How different things were now!

No more intimacy, far more ceremony. Madame Mere herself felt the change. The pretty face and winning ways of the Princess Pauline had made her the spoiled child of the family. She was allowed to do anything. Even the Emperor, who so frequently was severe toward others, let her do things for

which anyone else would have been reprimanded. Everyone said,

"She is nothing but a child."

And what a pretty child she was! What she said never seemed to be worth paying attention to and I cannot understand why I should have felt so badly about the remarks she made when I came back to court. With great animation she reproached me for having been the cause of my children's losing the throne of Holland, of my husband's exile and all his misfortunes.

This indictment was a shock to me. My reason and conscience both proved to me that I was innocent, yet my feeble strength was not able to repulse this false accusation. The ills I still suffered from made more acute the memories of those I sought to recall in order to justify myself.

Princess Pauline, whose only interests in life were fashions and amusements, must have been surprised and perhaps pleased at having produced so marked an effect on anyone, when for the first time in her life she spoke about serious matters.

In fact the entire family was, I believe, sorry to see me return to court. I can understand being jealous when one's affections are involved, but not when it is merely a question of precedence, of more or less becoming dresses, of some more or less marked social success.

The joy the Emperor's family had felt on my departure for Holland was an indication of their regret at seeing me return. Especially as they could now no longer reproach me for being there, since the future of my children was once more associated with France.

The Emperor, although he did not mean to do so, had done everything possible to inflame the jealousy his family felt toward us. He had for a long time treated me with special favor, because as he desired to adopt the son, he wished the mother to be especially respected. How many times Caroline came and said to me : entertain the same way you do I always act as you do, because I come and ask in advance how you are going to act ; and yet the Emperor always holds you up to me as an example as though you were the only person who knows how to behave. Then too he is all the time saying to Murat and his brothers, 'Look at Eugene.' How can he expect harmony to reign among us?"

Since then people so often told the Emperor that he favored us at the expense of his own family that he was forced to adopt the opposite course.

Madame Mere, who was worried about what was happening to her son Louis, thought of sending Monsieur Decazes to him. Monsieur Decazes, on his return to France from Holland and after I had refused to make him my chief secretary, had resumed his former post as judge, of a court of the first instance in Paris.

He had remained in touch with my husband. The Emperor's relatives thought that a letter from me might persuade my husband to return. I wrote it, but the curious thing was that the more I feared this return, the more I tried to have it take place in order to exculpate myself in my own mind of not

wanting something which might make another person happy.

I therefore placed my best carriage at the disposal of Monsieur Decazes, thinking it might be used by the King. I paid the expenses of several trips he made to Austria, and some months later on, hearing that my husband refused to come back to France, I was very glad not to be in any way to blame for this attitude.

The Emperor had given the King an allowance of 2,000,000 francs, of which 500,000 came from a forest near Saint Cloud, a domain which had been granted my second son.

The rest was paid by the Treasury. When the King refused to accept this sum the Emperor turned it over to me.

I paid all my husband's debts and bestowed pensions upon those who had served him devotedly, even upon those people of whom I had often been forced to complain. Monsieur Decazes told me that my husband had given him a letter for me which the Emperor had confiscated, as he had also done several others addressed to the Senate, to the Secretary of the imperial family, etc.

That same evening the Emperor, next to whom I was seated, said to me very gravely "Your husband is mad. He is writing to all the French authorities. He has written you a letter which will not be delivered to you. I have kept it. He wishes to be somebody and forgets what he owes to France and to me. He deserves that I punish him by abandoning his children."

I could not understand what these abrupt sentences meant. The last one brought tears to my eyes. The Emperor noticed it. "Fortunately, I am kind-hearted," he went on, "and people always count on that. It is not the fault of those poor children. But they would deserve to be pitied if they had only their father to look after them."

That was all I ever knew about the incident, and for a long time I kept wondering what new grounds for irritation the King might have given his brother.

It was not until 1814 that I saw in the Gazette de Lausanne the text of my husband's statement to the Senate and the passage in it where he forbade me to accept anything from the Emperor.

He left me his estate at Saint-Leu and all his private property, which in France had only consisted of his house in Paris and the country place of Saint-Leu. The latter was charming, brought in no revenue and cost more than 30,000 francs a year to keep up.

The trip to Fontainebleau was over. My mother had come back to Malmaison, and I settled down in my home in Paris, free for the first time to arrange my life in accordance with my tastes.

My household had again been reorganized and established with all the importance due a person of my rank. The Emperor had given orders that this should be done, and he was right. He wished the princes to spend all their income in order that this money should go back to the people whence it had

come.

Madame la Comtesse de Caulaincourt, mother of the Duc de Vicence, was my chief lady in waiting. She had known me from my babyhood and was sincerely attached to me. I had kept the Dutch lady in waiting who had accompanied me back to France, as well as my former ladies in waiting and my French officers.

Monsieur de Marmol was especially attached to my children, and Abbe Bertrand was my private chaplain.

Madame de Broc had come to live with me. Her bitter grief had given place to a gentle melancholy. Her affection for me seemed to fill her entire heart. I was equally fond of my friend, and constantly sought for her a man as exemplary as the husband she had lost.

I thought of Monsieur de Pourtales, the friend of Monsieur de Flahaut whom I had had appointed my mother's equerry. His fortune was very great, and his character charming, but it was all a question of time and of keeping Adele in ignorance of my plans. An indoor life would have been the only one which agreed with my constantly poor health, but I was forced to go occasionally in the evening to see the Emperor and attend every Sunday the family dinner he gave.

My frequent trips to Malmaison also tired me, as did the crowd of people. I did not care about those who were always there and toward whom I no longer had the strength to make the least effort to be agreeable.

The one thing I enjoyed was staying at home. I avoided receptions, concerts and the theater but gathered a little group of people about me, which was much discussed. All the persons belonging to this group were distinguished by their charm, their wit and their excellent reputation.

I had made a very limited selection, the establishment of which gave me quite a little trouble. Everybody who was received at the court felt entitled to figure on my list, and this made it difficult for me whose only aim was to secure a quiet, intimate gathering and pleasant conversation.

In the morning I received no visitors. I would sketch with Adele, and dine either alone or with her. In the evening, surrounded by my children I received, from eight o'clock on the people whose names figured on my list.

We played or sang. The gentlemen could play billiards. On a large table in the middle of the room everyone found something with which to amuse himself.'

The ladies sewed or chatted. Tea was served at ten o'clock. Frequently midnight or one o'clock struck while some animated discussion was still going on, which would have lasted still later had it not been for the hostess's poor health. I had great difficulty in persuading my officers not to remain standing as though they were on duty, but to join in our diversions.

I wished my home to seem like a family gathering where politeness is the rule and where innocent mirth does not dispel the respectful attitude of the guests toward the hostess.

I had been so successful in forming a drawing-room such as I desired and such as rarely exists that it acquired a wider reputation than I wished. In spite of my giving receptions and balls everyone had the ambition to be admitted to my private parties.

My sisters-in-law criticized me severely for allowing men to attend in ordinary dress-coats. I even feared the Emperor might not be pleased if he heard of it. He merely said to me one day, "People are saying that you have a clearing house of wit at your home."

"As usual people feel they have to be talking about us," I replied. "I would as soon have that sort of reputation as any other."

No more was said. It was natural that such gatherings should please me in several respects. I could say to myself: "Today these are my acquaintances; in ten years they will have become my friends. Slander will no longer be able to touch me. At least I shall have some defenders. Now people may meet me informally, judge me for themselves, and if I please them they will reward me with their affection. What more do I need?"

I shall not seek to hide the fact that it was the wish to see the man I loved which made me invite many others and take extra pains to form an agreeable social circle. I never sent special invitations to those whom I had informed once and for all that their names were on my list.

They were free to come or not as they chose. This is how I understand social life. I did not wish to impose a respect for my rank which would make them feel obliged to accept my invitation and perhaps refuse one they would have enjoyed more.

This complete informality made admission to my circle a dearly sought privilege. If I happened to be absent one day I was sure that those who had not found me at home would return the following evening more eagerly than ever.

Monsieur de Flahaut was not one of the least assiduous of my guests. As soon as he came into the room, no matter how easy the conversation I was having might be, it at once became difficult for me. My wits deserted me as long as he was present. I could not find a word to say.

I knew I should have to speak to him as to any other guest, but I could do so only by not looking at him, in a voice that was not my natural one. If he made a remark, I did not seem to have heard it. Yet not a syllable he spoke was lost to me.

Frequently he complained that I was not as pleasant to him as to the others. A smile informed him how welcome this reproof was to me, since it showed that I had been able to conceal the violence of my emotions. Monsieur de Flahaut wrote me often. When I answered him, I took no pains to hide my

affection. It seemed that when he was absent, I cared a thousand times more for him.

I no longer had to struggle to preserve appearances and I should have reproached myself if I had not let him see how dear he was to me. Yet when I saw him again everything was different. He must have found me difficult to understand.

I alone could know my varied emotions. It was when hostilities forced him into the midst of danger that I felt I should go mad with anxiety. I could talk about nothing else but Monsieur de Flahaut to Adele; he was the object of all my thoughts. But when he came back, I was nervous and embarrassed.

The only way I betrayed the fact that I cared for him was in my efforts to stifle it. I do not know whether I appeared to him to be utterly indifferent. But the persons who were near me could make no such mistake.

They were too much interested in the feelings of her on whom they were dependent not to discover the secret it was so difficult for her to keep. The clairvoyant friendship of Adele had something admirable about it.

If, leaning against the mantelpiece, Monsieur de Flahaut had managed to remain alone with me, if our conversation lasted longer than it should have done, she would come up and remind me that other persons were present who would feel offended if I did not speak to them.

A desire to protect me made her sense the maliciousness of others, and her affection was always on the watch for means of preserving me from it. A word or a sign from her was at once understood, and my heart was always as grateful as it was docile to her suggestion.

May I confess one of my faults that caused me the greatest suffering? I was jealous, and this jealousy was of the kind that embitters the soul because it does not utter a single complaint but consumes a person in silence.

Monsieur de Flahaut was a man whose qualities and weaknesses were of the type that best inspires such sentiments. He had an excellent mind, a quick wit and was charming and even brilliant, sensitive but superficial, more desirous of being liked than yearning to be loved.

Completely absorbed in the task of charming any woman whose interest he happened to have aroused, he frequently hurt the feelings of the one whom he seemed to have forgotten. Eager though he was to see me, he was equally attracted by other pleasures which separated us. Although there was not one he would not have sacrificed for my sake, there was not one which he deliberately abstained from. I urged him to amuse himself, ashamed of my secret impulse to restrain him, happy if he disobeyed me, alarmed if he obeyed too willingly, and always in the end wondering, since what he felt was what people call love, what name I should give to my own emotion.

In spite of my eagerness to see him again I never once asked him, "Shall I see you tomorrow?" I always waited for him to express his desire to see me as I could only enjoy what was offered me

spontaneously. Many ladies seemed interested in Monsieur de Flahaut. I noticed this. If he had told me about it I should have believed him. I repeatedly told him that no lasting affection can exist between two people unless it is founded on mutual confidence, that such frankness excuses all faults, and since none of us are perfect at least we should try to be sincere.

In vain he assured me that he could never love another woman, that people like me were too rarely met with, that it was I who had for the first time made him believe there was good in the world, that I was making him better, that he never would have the courage to be unfaithful to me.

Yet in spite of all these assurances I was always making him confess some passing fancy, and the present like the future was troubled by them. I was too keenly aware that in view of his character I must anticipate someday his no longer caring for me. But I wished him to be the one to announce this to me, to come to me and say, "I love someone else."

I insisted he should do this, so convinced was I that I would hold out my hand to the man who had just pierced my heart and even sympathize with the woman who had taken his affection from me. If that was not love it was something finer.

Every time I complained to Madame de Broc how unhappy I was she would say, "Certainly you have not that happiness which you once dreamed of. But look around you. Who is there who is perfectly happy? Fate has tied you irrevocably to a man with whom you cannot live and fate has separated you from him without even giving you any reason to blame yourself for this separation.

After a long period of slavery, you at last are free, mistress of your own actions. Your children are near you. You are enormously wealthy, you can do much good. You are loved and admired by all those who know you and yet you blame Providence."

Feeling the wisdom of these remarks, I conquered my discouragement and sought at least to bring happiness to others. I took particular pains to leave those about me entirely free. I do not believe I ever refused a single request that might give someone pleasure. Yet, in spite of this I saw people frequently discontented.

If any complained that I gave them too much to do I at once relieved them of a part of their duties. Then they would complain that I did not pay enough attention to them. People tried to prove I was fussy. Even the young women I had with me and for whom I sought to find husbands accused me of being ungrateful and hard-hearted because I sent them away from me.

How difficult it is for a princess to satisfy all the different personal ambitions that revolve about her. Perhaps one who is proud and haughty succeeds better.

The more distant she is, the fewer favors she bestows, the more people value the least sign of graciousness on her part. If she gives them a look they are surprised and touched. People generally fear her; they hold themselves aloof and hardly dare as much as express an opinion about her.

To belong to her household is considered a duty, and no one expects any marks of affection or intimacy. On the contrary a princess who is good, kind, willing to listen to anyone, allows all those with whom she comes in contact to consider themselves her friends. Much is expected of her; her slightest action is freely commented on. If she once mentions something she cares about, the person to whom she has spoken considers himself from then on entitled to know all her secret thoughts.

If a stranger converses with her at too great length, others are jealous, criticize her, complain about her, and as they themselves misunderstand her actions they make others do so. This is the way in which those who call themselves our friends, and who consider themselves such, often do us more harm than enemies who are too far away to be able to wound us by their attacks.

In spite of these little drawbacks which are inseparable from a position of prominence my household was fairly calm and as united as it could possibly have been.

As for the Emperor's court it was serious and staid. It lacked that refinement of courtesy, that polish which are characteristic qualities of French society.

A young man scarcely dared to speak to a young woman. He was afraid of being in the least attentive for fear of making himself conspicuous, which would indeed have been the case. The court was composed of so many different cliques that it was necessary to observe the utmost prudence.

The women in general were remarkable for their good behavior, for their dignity which even became at times rather rigid, and for their modesty which was never awkwardness. One never heard a loud discussion.

If one did not find there the wit, ease and courtliness of a Sevigne or La Fayette, or those amusements which flourished in the days when people's sole desire was to make themselves agreeable, yet one discovered on the part of the women an abundance of solid virtues, the assiduity of maternal devotion and all the duties it involves, a willingness to sacrifice idle amusements for evenings spent in serious occupations, and an ability in the conduct of business matters equal to that which the husband away at the front might have exercised had he been present.

Moreover, all the arts—music, painting, song and dance—were practiced with talent. On the other hand a woman who wrote poetry or took an interest in politics would have been made fun of. This was in accordance with the Emperor's tastes.

He objected to the days when women had political influence. How often did he not say to my mother or me, when we made some simple remark or asked for a position for one of our proteges:

"Now then, now then, we are getting ready to be ruled by a distaff and I shall have to do embroidery."

The Emperor was so severe as regards personal morality that he frequently sent to the front young men who had been sufficiently attentive to some married women to run the risk of disturbing their married life.

He was especially jealous of the reputation of the court ladies and of the wives of his generals. But his efforts to protect them frequently did the reverse, for people would openly discuss the reasons for these sudden departures, and it was even said that he caused them for reasons of his own gossip that was never true.

He merely sought to frighten the woman who might for an instant have thought of forgetting her duties.

Once he said to me, "I am sure young men never dare to look at you. They are afraid of me."

This idea amused him. It was on purpose that the Emperor wished his court to be severe rather than entertaining.

One day when the Queen of Naples was telling my mother, the Empress, about an evening she had spent at a masked ball and all the witty things she had said there, the Emperor interrupted her impatiently saying: "Once upon a time all that was amusing enough. It is not any more. A princess must set an example and behave in accordance with the rules of her day. The time for light and frivolous amusements has passed. Everything now must be serious and severe."

Yet he would occasionally be quite merry when alone with us. This was true particularly in the days when my mother was with him. On such occasions he whispered all sorts of remarks into her ear and if he thought I might have overheard them and feel embarrassed he would laugh till tears came to his eyes.

Once, for instance, when my mother was present, he was telling me about his former success with the ladies, adding, "I never found a single one who resisted:

"That was probably because you never tried one who was in the habit of resisting."

He began to laugh, pinched my ear till I could have cried and said to my mother, "Listen to what your daughter is saying about me. She thinks I have always been old."

I have always seen him more reserved with his new wife, but also more gentle and more anxious to please. He frequently urged her to enjoy the pleasures of her age.

"If you like to dance," he said, "send for the music. Go and watch the masked balls. Visit the public buildings and state factories."

"No," replied the Empress, "not unless you go with me."

"But I have no time. Go with Hortense. The Parisians will be glad to catch a glimpse of you."

"No, I would rather stay here." And that would be the end of the matter. If she kept him waiting for dinner, he would greet her with the words, "Ah I see, you have been making yourself beautiful."

Yet often he had been greatly displeased with my mother for an equally unimportant matter. One day at one of the great receptions, when we were wearing all our diamonds, after he had complimented us on our appearance the Emperor caught sight of himself in the mirror and looking at his simple uniform of the Guard, said as he turned away, "One must be very vain to dress so simply."

He charmed everyone who came near him when he gave way to his good-nature. No one who saw him in those moods would have guessed he was the man before whom all Europe trembled and whose greatness of mind impressed us as much as it did any other members of his court.

He never appeared otherwise than grave in public. People imitated him and wherever he appeared he became the center of attention. Everyone hoped he would speak to him, and I have seen men at receptions given by the Empress decline to sit at a card-table with young and pretty women and remain standing, in the hope that the Emperor, who sometimes liked to chat with those who were in the drawing-room doing nothing, might speak to them.

When the Emperor felt like talking there was not a subject on which he did not have something original to say. He never feared to utter his political views. Once when surrounded by a number of persons attached to the court he said: "I never thought of replacing the Bourbons on the throne. They would not have been able to make France happy for two reasons: because the nation has harmed them too much ever to trust them, and because they would never have been able to satisfy the claims of those they brought back with them. A new man was necessary, a man not contaminated by the excesses of the Revolution, who could unite all parties and who was strong enough to stabilize all the advantages the Revolution had won."

I believe that there never was a court where morals were as pure as at that of the Emperor. Yet few courts have ever been as much condemned. This is easily explained. On the one hand there were a few republicans who, angry at the brilliant positions which some of their former associates had achieved, sought, sarcastically, to assail the circles to which they had not been promoted.

On the other were the former nobles, delighted at the revival of the traditional court etiquette, but at the same time remaining disdainful of the newer nobility and somewhat jealous of its laurels.

As courtiers of the old regime they were obliged to find excuses for the pleasure they took in the splendor of the new court. When they went back to see their old relatives who had remained faithful to the old regime they criticized and made fun of the present conditions, seeking, at the price of a few witticisms, to secure forgiveness for their weakness in aspiring to share the new honors.

How many efforts to secure a position people explained by saying, "It was forced upon me." As Monsieur de Talleyrand put it: "I have a list of people who want to be forced." The police system

directed by the Duc de Rovigo also did a great deal of harm to the court ladies. His predecessor Fouché only harmed the Emperor when he obliged the latter to exile certain persons of the Faubourg Saint-Germain from Paris.

Whenever a complaint was made to Fouché he would pretend to know nothing about it, blaming it on the Emperor's impetuous temperament, on the fact that there were a hundred other branches of the police department which he could not superintend.

In the end he would promise to wait for a favorable moment and have the sentence of banishment lifted. Later, it is true, he would request the Emperor to rescind the order which he had himself asked for, thus giving himself all the credit and letting his master take all the blame. He thus made followers for himself, but he never bothered about drawing-room gossip or petty social intrigues.

The Duc de Rovigo, on the other hand, seemed to do nothing else than collect the slightest bits of information about everyone's private life. He acted as his own detective, wished to be the confidant of the ladies, stirred up quarrels between them, told stories which might or might not be true, spent all his morning making visits from one to another.

If, in the Bois de Boulogne, a woman surrounded by her children and her friends happened to be speaking to a man and caught sight of the Duc de Rovigo she felt her reputation was lost.

All our ladies did their best to avoid him. They declared he compromised them on purpose in order to make people forget about the person to whom he was attached and toward whom society was distinctly hostile.

The Duc de Rovigo may have been brave, witty, devoted to his master and had other qualities besides, but only the most firmly rooted virtue can withstand the contact with that mass of corruption, the police department.

What excuse has one to assume the right to pry into the secrets of others, and what can one respect if one does not respect the sanctity of family life? If it is necessary for the good of the state to carry on such investigations to a certain point, then the high morals of the man who does so should reassure the public as to the purity of his Intentions.

His character should offer society a guarantee for the power it bestows upon him. It was for these reasons that the Emperor when he appointed Monsieur de Lavallette director of the post office said to him, "I give you this post because you are the most honest man I know."

Nor did Monsieur de Lavallette ever cause the slightest uneasiness. Savary, although he was admired as the Emperor's aide-de-camp, did not meet with the same favor as cabinet minister.

It was natural enough that the Emperor should wish to know what was going on at his court and especially what the members of his family were doing, but the minister had no right to inform others

regarding his suspicions or his discoveries.

I personally never had any reason to complain of him. On the contrary he only showed me consideration and esteem. But he did not like the Emperor's sisters and he did them a vast amount of harm by relating a thousand stories true or false, about their home-life, to which no one could witness, but which everyone afterwards repeated.

I persist in saying therefore that in spite of all the libels it was made the object of no court has ever been more moral or more strict than that of the Emperor. Many receptions were held. Besides the two formal gatherings in the state apartments there was twice a week either a play or a concert given by the Empress in her apartment on a little stage.

The fact that the most distinguished artists were present did not change the chilly and stilted atmosphere. The entertainment became so formal that it lost all gaiety. At my mother's house, on the contrary, in her exile at Malmaison, everything was gracious and pleasant.

Dignity did not prevent enjoyment. The young and talented ladies whom she had gathered about her in addition to her ladies in waiting made the evenings delightful.

People were glad to attend in spite of her living out of town and having no more favors to bestow. The manners of the gentlemen of that day, although not as gracious or as flattering as they are said to have been in earlier times, had unquestionably improved since the establishment of the Empire.

Men were simple, sincere and polite. In the early days of the Consulate I had seen young republicans holding their heads very high, apparently unwilling to admit that anyone could be their superior.

Since then I have seen young nobles who gave themselves disdainful airs, apparently unwilling to admit that anyone could be their equal. Both in time modified their attitude and improved by doing so.

According to the criticisms of those who are not received there no court can exist without flatterers and sycophants. It is the fashion to apply these terms to all those who belong to a court. I can imagine that under some feeble king everyone may seek to make himself the favorite and can do so by committing some base action.

I can also admit that under a powerful king the man who obtains the sovereign's favor may deserve the epithet of "courtier" in a derogatory sense, if the desire for advancement makes him prefer flattery to plain-speaking. But a palace where well brought-up people meet is not different from any private residence except that in the former there exist traditional rules of conduct which guide one's behavior, whereas in the latter one follows the taste and inclination of the lady of the house.

How many young men there are who for fear of the ridicule associated with the term "courtling" adopt a distant tone, an insolent manner and an air of despising those about them. If they are clever this

weakness does not last long. They themselves become aware that their attitude is not to their advantage, and they adopt those manners they once sought to avoid and become in their turn courtiers in all that that word implies in the way of courtesy and politeness.

One must be fair and admit that in society the things which are attractive are consideration for women, kindness toward all, delicate thoughtfulness for others, polished manner of speech, correctness of dress, and especially those expressions of respect which can so easily be uttered and which are so agreeable to hear.

I know that corruption may be hidden away behind all this, but at least it is pleasant to meet at every step what appears to be virtue. Moreover, what better tribute can you pay to virtue than to seek to wear its colors in order to charm?

Why does not the inner self correspond to this brilliant exterior? Because the latter too often is a cloak beneath which the adventurer hides his maneuvers. As for flattery, that fault which is so often attributed to courtiers, no one need be ashamed of it.

What greater flatterer is there than a king? How many times he says without meaning it: "I depend on your devotion to my cause; I place my honor in your hands."

If he hears praise addressed to him, does he in turn not give it to others? To be sure this is of no importance in one case or the other. It is merely a conventional form of speech which deceives no one. If I appear to be defending here the manners one finds at court, I nevertheless think one should wish a noble sincerity to be admired in all ranks of society.

About this time, I made my appearance at Ecouen as princesse protectrice of the school. The institution was the result of a fine moment of enthusiasm on the part of the Emperor. The day after the Battle of Austerlitz, touched by the loss of so many brave men whose death had added to his own glory, he decreed while still on the field of battle that he was prepared to adopt the children of all those who had lost their lives on that famous occasion.

On his return, while he was still hesitating as to how to put his decree into effect on account of his opinion that girls should be brought up by their mothers, he sent for Madame Campan, consulted her and finally said:

"I shall not limit myself to provide an education for a small number of girls. I do not like little things, they are of no value. Saint-Cyr was only a flower-garland which the love of Louis XIV offered Madame de Maintenon.

"Two hundred and fifty daughters of nobles were nothing compared to eight thousand families of poor gentlefolk. I shall educate four or five hundred girls or none at all and I shall reform public morals."

The execution of this plan was postponed, but after the Battle of Friedland he wrote with his own hand and drew up a very complete set of instructions, which have ever since been strictly observed in this institution.

My reception at Ecouen was a touching one. I was happy every time I visited this place where so many young hearts were brought up to love me and where I again experienced the emotions of my childhood and that lightheartedness, that confidence in others which life too quickly effaces.

The establishment was far superior to Saint-Cyr. It is true that Madame Campan devoted all her remarkable talents to its success. I had a road made connecting Saint-Leu and Ecouen in order to go there as often as my health permitted. The school at Saint Denis was also organized, as well as six other schools for orphan girls where no mere social accomplishments were taught, but where the pupils learned things only of practical value.

I had all these institutions under my protection. It was as if I were the mother of all the girls in France. In their prayers my name and that of the Emperor were the only two specially mentioned.

Consequently, people were jealous of me. The Empress was frequently told it was she who should have this position. Indeed, she even came to wish that she did have it, but the Emperor always kept it for me.

For her he had organized a Mother's Aid Society, and Madame Mere was placed at the head of all the French Sisters of Charity. Thus, it was to his family that the Emperor confided the care of the young and the unfortunate.

The time of the Empress's confinement drew near. The Grand Duc de Wurzburg was in Paris. A page came one evening to fetch me because the Empress was feeling the first birth pains.

I hastened to the Tuilleries. All the court had assembled there. In the Empress's room there were the Emperor, Madame Mere, Madame la Comtesse de Montesquiou, the governess, Madame de Montebello, chief lady in waiting. Madame de Luray, lady of the wardrobe, Madame de Boubers, whom I had given the Emperor to be assistant governess to his children, Madame de Mesgrigny, who had the same title, all the women, the doctors and accoucheurs.

Two young dames d'annonce from Ecouen remained in the little cabinet between the bedroom and the drawing-room in which we were my brother, the Grand Duc de Wurzburg, the Princess Pauline, the Queen of Spain and I.

All the other drawing-rooms were filled with members of the court and other officials. The Emperor came in from time to time and told us how things were going. According to whether the pain was more or less acute he seemed more or less nervous.

He was worried that the labor should last so long and asked us whether this might not have unfortunate results for the mother or child. He did not dare to entertain the hope of having a son. It was

clear that he was trying to accept the contrary.

Nevertheless, he inquired carefully if there were no signs by which one could tell in advance the sex of the child, and all his questions betrayed his anxiety. I was so tired that about four o'clock I accepted the offer of one of the dames d'annonce to let me use her room." I threw myself, fully dressed, on the bed and told her I was to be called if she heard the Empress begin to scream. During my sleep the pains had subsided. It was believed the delivery would not take place immediately, and everyone was advised to go and rest.

About seven o'clock the pains began again. The child presented itself badly. The accoucheur almost lost his mind when the Emperor calmly told him he should act as he would in the case of a woman of the lowest class and above all try to save the mother. The Empress was therefore delivered with forceps.

The Emperor did not leave her side an instant. He held her in his arms and tried to encourage her, but he himself was so seriously shaken by the sight of his wife's suffering that for the rest of the day he was afflicted with a sort of nervous trembling. About eight o'clock in the morning my dame d'annonce suddenly entered the room where I was resting and told me, with tears, "The Empress is uttering terrible cries."

I hurried downstairs and found the Emperor leaving his wife's room. He was pale and hardly able to breathe. "It is over," he said to me; "she is safe."

He looked so miserable that I timidly asked him, "Is it a boy?"

"Yes," he replied with an effort. On hearing this I embraced him, but he had such difficulty in breathing that he pushed me aside.

"Ah," he said, "I cannot grasp all that happiness. The poor woman suffered so." He left me to give orders to have the hundred cannon shots fired. I entered the Empress's room. She was still on her bed of pain, and the accoucheur was beside her. I approached the midwife who held the child. He appeared to me to be strong and healthy. I next went over to the Empress and congratulated her.

There were so many people in the room that I left. I found the Emperor so deeply moved by the anxiety for his wife which he had just experienced that, in order to master his painful emotion, he assumed a grave air instead of showing his delight.

This serious air contrasted with the enthusiasm everyone else displayed. People were surprised not to find on his features that calm contentment which happiness gives, especially at such a moment when Providence had answered his prayers.

The more complete this answer had been, the more gratitude he was expected to show. His attitude was severely criticized. People thought he lacked feeling, while as a matter of fact it was one of the occasions on which I saw him the most deeply moved. To forget all thoughts of ambition and the

future, to remain only a fond husband at the moment when you have become a happy father, surely this shows that the heart has a greater influence than all the rest.

For my own part I confess I was embarrassed by the sympathetic and curious glances I received. The sight of the Emperor's emotion had touched me, and I had not given a thought to the fact that this birth increased the distance which separated my sons from the throne. I had hoped his wishes would be fulfilled, just as a child hopes to see his father or his benefactor contented. The idea that my children might wear the crown of France had not occurred to me.

At least I had never desired them to do so, and if there was any sacrifice to be made, I had made it on the day of the divorce. I therefore sincerely shared the Emperor's joy, but how awkward and embarrassed you become when you see that people judge your conduct in accordance with their own ideas.

People think you should be sad, see that you are happy, and conclude you are a hypocrite. Since strangers feel the need of praising or criticizing you, you are obliged to behave as they wish you to, hide a kind thought as you would conceal an evil one, or, if you are sincere, pay the penalty.

On this occasion I acted as I did frequently; I let myself be swayed by my feelings. I knew they were kindly ones, and from the moment I considered them nothing to be ashamed of, I paid little attention to how they might seem to others. The Emperor gave his son the title of King of Rome. He was baptized privately that same evening in the chapel. I was present, and two months later his public baptism took place at Notre Dame.

The Emperor of Austria and the King of Naples were the godfathers. Madame Mere and the Queen of Naples were the god-mothers. The Grand Duc de Wurzburg represented the Emperor of Austria, and I was to take the place of the Queen of Naples.

When Grand Marshal Duroc came and announced this to me I refused. I felt that the Queen of Naples could have someone else represent her and I did not care to be present at this ceremony held in the same church where my son was buried.

My refusal annoyed the Emperor, to whom I had not explained my reasons. He considered it extraordinary that I would not hold his son at the font. He believed I considered it beneath my dignity to act on behalf of someone else.

The matter was discussed at a cabinet meeting. It was pointed out that it would not be the first time one princess took another's place, that she could not refuse to do so and that my refusal would not be accepted. The evening before the ceremony I called on the Emperor just as he was retiring. I stepped forward to beg him not to insist on my presence at the ceremony, giving as excuse that I did not feel strong enough for it.

He turned away abruptly and said he had not intended to humiliate me when he did me the honor to ask me to carry his son. I returned home, oppressed in spirits and not knowing what course to

pursue. Since the death of my son I had not had the courage to enter the church of Notre Dame where his body lay.

It seemed that I must now make my first visit to this place, and in the midst of a brilliant court adorned with all my diamonds, covered with flowers and giving all signs of joy, tread perhaps on that hallowed spot where his bones were lying.

I did not feel I had the courage to do this. "I shall not be able to control my emotion," I told Adele. "Should I not avoid making a scene in public?"

She reminded me of the Emperor's annoyance, pointing out that he would be angry with me without having understood my motives. Finally, I decided to go at once to Notre Dame so that by visiting it alone, I might get over the shock of the first vivid impressions and have more strength to endure my feelings on the morrow.

Adele opposed my wishes. She feared the experience might be more than my feeble health could bear. "At least I shall be there alone with you," I exclaimed.

"No one will intrude on my sad thoughts, and tomorrow I shall be able to banish them from my mind."

It was then midnight. In a plain carriage without liveried attendants I arrived alone with Adele in front of the portals of Notre Dame. The church was shut. I went to the archbishop's palace nearby, where after a little argument the gatekeeper consented to admit us to the vast edifice, so imposing on account of its memories, yet visualizing to a mother who sees it rise above the coffin of her son only a symbol of her grief.

Everything was ready for the baptismal ceremonies. Some workmen far in the back of the church were still completing their task. The dim light of their feeble lanterns, the sound of their hammers occasionally breaking the silence, so like that of the tomb especially to one whose mind was haunted by thoughts of death—all this combined to fill my heart with feelings of terror and sadness.

Everything that had been cruel and bitter in the past rose before me. It overwhelmed me. Unable to bear up under the weight of my sorrow I fell on my knees in front of the altar and poured forth torrents of tears. The old doorkeeper, lantern in hand, looked at me with astonishment.

He helped Adele bear me away from this mournful scene. The next morning I reentered the church in state. The clergy had come to the main entrance to meet us. Standing up next to the Empress, to whom an address was being made, I remembered how a few years before they had come on the same spot to meet the body of my poor child.

My courage nearly failed me, but my previous day's visit had strengthened it, and no one noticed the strain I was under.

The celebrations in honor of the christening were magnificent. I attended those held at the Hotel de Ville and at Saint Cloud. Finally, unable to stand all these ceremonies any longer, I left to take the waters at Aix-en-Savoie.

The Emperor during my absence gave my children permission to live at the Pavillon d'Italie. Since the birth of the King of Rome they had continued to attend their uncle's luncheon as they had done previously. He always received them pleasantly, making them sit beside him, although there was hardly any room for them, as his lunch was served rapidly on a small, round, one legged table.

This was the hour when he saw people who were not received at court, distinguished artists, his architects with whom he discussed the beautifying of Paris, and occasionally Talma (the actor), a fact which gave rise to the ridiculous report that the Emperor took lessons in diction from him.

The Empress Josephine was very anxious to see the King of Rome. Madame de Montesquiou took him one day to Bagatelle where she also went. She fondled him a great deal and could not refrain from weeping as she kissed him and exclaimed, "Ah, dear child, someday perhaps you will know how much you cost me."

The Emperor paid my mother a visit which pained the Empress Marie Louise. He had however taken every precaution to avoid her hearing of it. Fearing to increase her uneasiness he did not return again. The waters at Aix did me good: My brother came to see me on his way back to Italy and urged me to take advantage of being so near to make the acquaintance of his young family, but I fell ill. My brother, anxious about my health, crossed the Simplon Pass, but I was obliged to return to France without having carried out that pleasant plan.

The Emperor in the meanwhile had made a trip through Holland with the Empress. While there they saw my apartments, heard details regarding my domestic life and came back sympathizing with me more than ever. I wished to find a governor for my children. Monsieur de Las Cases and Monsieur de Saint-Aulaire applied for the post.

I spoke to the Emperor about the matter. He said to me: "France will be sorry to see the education of your children placed in the hands of a noble. It is one of the heroes of my army who should bring up French princes."

The choice seemed to me so difficult that it was postponed. The Queen of Naples, to whom a little matter of nine hundred miles did not matter as a journey, arrived in Paris unexpectedly and before we even had heard of her departure from Naples.

Certain difficulties had arisen between the Emperor and her husband, who having been made King of Naples by the Emperor also wished to be independent. She arrived in the hope of reconciling them.

Murat had for a long time pretended to be deeply attached to the Emperor. He declared he could not leave him for more than twenty-four hours. He would have refused all the thrones in the

world in order to be near his idol and had no other ambition, so he said, than to serve him.

Caroline was always saying, "The Emperor is like a god to my husband. I should be jealous of such devotion." And the Emperor himself, although he frequently said that a monarch should be feared during his lifetime and loved only after his death, had been deceived by these demonstrations of affection on the part of Murat, whom he believed utterly devoted to his interests.

Murat was a good man. He was dashing and brave, and possessed military talents together with a great desire to please and to be admired. He sought to have good manners and overdid them.

One saw by his exaggerated dress and his attentions to the ladies that he wished to resemble the Villarceaux and Sevignes of the days of Louis XIV. These famous courtiers were the models he had chosen, but the rough hearty republican could not be completely hidden, and the mixture of the two opposite types of character would have been ridiculous at times if one had not been conscious of the honest, frank soldier in the background who reconciled the puppets one to the other.

Consequently, in spite of his male and martial beauty he was a far less dangerous person than he imagined. He had an excellent heart, a mediocre mind, and the rise of his fortunes had been too rapid not to have slightly turned his head.

Ambition without those qualities which justify it is a despicable thing, and only really great men can make it into a virtue. The ambition of Murat was a result of his good fortune, and after being a distinguished general he became a second-rate monarch.

He made me smile one day while he was still only Grand Duc de Berg. He was complaining about the Emperor who wished to annex the city of Wesel to France. "The Emperor had no right to take that town away from me," he declared. "It was not he who gave it to me. I obtained it through a treaty with the King of Prussia." And who was it who had made that treaty? Who had given him his duchy, the town and everything else? Another time when the Emperor was reproaching him for extracting too much money from his duchy of Berg, Murat said with his slightly Gascon accent, "What do you mean, Sire? I spend my own on it."

The Queen of Naples had always taken her husband's part in his relations with the Emperor, but when she was alone with him her equal desire for power caused constant friction between them. "I am unhappier than you are," she said one day to me. "Louis cannot be more jealous or disagreeable than Murat. It is natural enough that I should wish to be the first person informed of what is going on in my kingdom. But what trouble it gives me! I am obliged to send out my valet secretly to meet the minister of foreign affairs or the chief of police by appointment down by the harbor. If there is any news it is sent me immediately, but the fear the King inspires is so great that the minister when I see him again is pale and trembling and eagerly asks whether I burned the paper that might endanger him. Tell me, can one submit to this sort of treatment?"

Far from arousing my compassion she only showed me the King was right in being suspicious of a Queen who bribed all the ministers in order to obtain secret information without his knowing it. I

considered that our lives were as different as our characters.

No one could possess to the same degree as Caroline the art of making herself agreeable and pleasing by adopting an attitude that had in it both a certain Oriental dignity and the supple grace of the odalisque. To be sure, at times a little claw emerged beneath the velvety touch of her caress, but a most carefully calculated abandon and the most gracious manner promptly cured the wound and captivated you anew.

Proud, brave, persevering, passionate, careless and variable as were her moods, the same charms which attracted people to her could not mask her desire to secure all power for herself, nor her jealousy of the successes of others.

Such was the Queen of Naples. We had for a long time been friendly when a petty incident separated us. The Emperor decided there were to be two elaborate balls given at court, one in fancy dress, the other masked. The Princesses were to be asked to present formal pageants.

Caroline, who lived at the Tuileries, heard the news first, and instead of talking the matter over with me at once drew up a list of the handsomest women and most popular men and sent out invitations to them to appear in her performance. I was at home in the evening with my ladies in waiting, the officers belonging to my household, and a few young men whom I knew when the grand marshal of the palace appeared with the Emperor's invitation, which the Queen of Naples was supposed to have sent me the day before.

I feared the task of rehearsing and carrying out a pageant would greatly tire me. I wished to decline, but everyone protested against my doing so. People pointed out that it was not the Queen of Naples who should do the honors of the Court of France. I should not submit to having my place taken like that and risk at the same time angering the Emperor.

Moreover, my friends considered that dancing instead of tiring me would do me good, and they promised to take all the other trouble off my shoulders. Especially they agreed to prevent my being obliged to talk much, as that would tire me, and to carry out my orders without discussion. I allowed myself to be convinced and accepted the offers of the young men who happened to be present.

Among them were Messieurs de Sainte-Aulaire, Germain, de Flahaut, de Canouville and several others. They all asked to be included in my ballet and suggested that I send word immediately to other persons I wished to include, being convinced, so they said, that the latter would prefer to be with me rather than with the Queen of Naples.

I therefore sent out my chamberlain, who arrived at the same time as the Queen's cards of invitation. The written invitations were all refused, the verbal ones accepted.

The Queen was greatly vexed and complained to the Emperor, who paid no attention to her. The court was large enough to allow both pageants to be composed of pretty women, but mine included the better dancers, and the absence of these made a difference in the general effect. The Queen of

Naples together with Princess Pauline had decided to present an allegory representing the reunion of Rome and France. She had selected the day of the costume ball. Much to my satisfaction I had been given that of the masked ball, which was to take place several days later."

The rivalry which sprang up between the performers in the two pageants was really amusing. The men, even the least frivolous, took the matter seriously. People called with sincere regret to inform me that the other pageant contained many clever and witty allusions in praise of the Emperor of France, and so on. I was urged not to be in any way inferior and to choose some allegorical subject also. I needed all the eloquence of my feeble voice to say repeatedly that we were not asked to dance in order to pay compliments to the Emperor. I knew he would not care for them and I believed personally that society people never danced well enough to undertake to execute *pas seuls*, which should be performed only by professional artists who are sure of their skill.

Moreover, an allegory acted out by people whom one recognizes may easily seem silly, whereas the attractiveness of a society pageant lies entirely in the beauty and richness of the costumes displayed, the way in which the colors harmonize, the good taste shown in the dances performed and the perfection of the whole spectacle.

Another time people came and begged me to allow them to add more ornaments to the costumes. Each of them was willing to sacrifice the general effect for his private convenience, but as it was I who gave the costumes I insisted that my wishes be carried out. I sometimes felt like laughing when I saw the grief and disappointment caused by my decisions, especially when certain inquisitive people had succeeded in discovering all the marvelous features which were to be included in the rival pageant. On the day the ball was to take place the theater of the Tuileries was transformed into a ballroom.

The Emperor was seated on a raised platform between the Empress and me. All the court and important foreign visitors filled the hall itself, and the boxes were given to the Parisians. The beauty and the jewelry of the two princesses were dazzling. One of them represented Rome, the other France." Their charming faces, their little helmets, their shields covered with diamonds and colored stones sparkled gaily.

The other women, dressed as water nymphs of the Tiber, the Hours, Iris, were all handsome and graceful, but the faces of the equerries and chamberlains, which one recognized as impersonating Stars, Zephyrs and Apollos, aroused mirth.

The pantomime did not seem appropriate either to the dignity of the persons acting in it or to the place where it was being performed. After the performance of the masque the Empress and I opened the ball with a French square dance.

Later other dances followed. The Emperor meanwhile went about speaking to everybody. He did not say a word about the pageant, but the next evening when I arrived to call on him and the Queen of Naples was also present, he said in a rather impatient tone:

"Where did you get the idea for your ballet? It was all nonsense. Rome has submitted to France, but it is not happy about it. Whoever gave you the idea of showing her as pleased and satisfied at being a dependent state? It was a ridiculous piece of flattery. I know of course that you only wished to look pretty and wear a handsome costume, but you could find other subjects and not try and set politics to music."

Then turning to me he added: "How about you? Are you too going to give us some sort of silly show? I warn you I don't like compliments." I hastened to say that my masque had nothing to do either with politics or with him.

"All the better," he said. Then, because he saw how marked a superiority he was just then giving me over to his sister, who after all had only been trying to please him, or perhaps because he felt like finding fault and recalled subjects that lent themselves to his humor, he continued as he walked up and down the drawing-room, "Ah, these young women. They are harder to keep in order than a regiment. After all I don't bite people's heads off. One can speak to me, consult me about what one is going to do. Not a bit of it. These ladies act as they choose. Yet in the position we occupy everything we do is important."

Then speaking directly to me he went on: "You, for example, what were you thinking of when you dressed up your son as a Polish lancer? Do you know I came near having war on your account? Do you know that Kourakin has complained about it, and the rumor has got about that I intend to make your son King of Poland? And what right has he to wear the epaulette of a captain? One must have fought to obtain that. You knew I made him take off his Dutch decorations because I do not wish any child belonging to the imperial family of France to wear a medal he has not earned. My family must do as I did and win everything at the point of the sword. If after all," he added more gently, "in order to have your son look well he must have a uniform, well, then dress him as a Red Lancer of the Dutch Guard. I will even go so far as to let him wear a second lieutenant's epaulette, which I hope he will later earn himself."

I had made no attempt to reply as long as the Emperor was speaking, for it was my mother who had made the Polish uniform as a New Year's present. The tailor had put on an epaulette and, as a matter of fact, I had never noticed it nor had anyone else.

I returned home well pleased, nevertheless, at having insisted on keeping my pageant the way I wanted it, because I saw that my ideas on the matter were the same as the Emperor's.

The costumes I had chosen were dazzling ones. Twenty-four ladies represented the priestesses of the Sun they were all dressed in gold. Twelve ladies and twelve gentlemen were Peruvians, with gold cloth and red plumes covered with diamonds and rubies. I as high priestess was all in silver, white plumes and white diamonds.

Eight ladies also in silver and with white plumes and diamonds and turquoise ornaments surrounded me. All the performers wore little black masks and executed their dances in front of the Sun,

which was carried by the priestesses.

Gardel had directed this pageant, which was so much admired that even court etiquette could not prevent violent expressions of enthusiasm on the part of the spectators.

At supper the Emperor said to the Queen of Naples, "Ah, that was better, much better than yours."

As I was masked, I received after our performance quantities of compliments which the fact that I was disguised permitted people to make me. There was no raised platform or throne. Everybody in the room was on the same level, and all wore masks.

A domino whom I recognized spoke to me and said, "How dazzling you are! One cannot look at you."

"I should make a good prize, should not I, with all the diamonds I have on?"

"You know very well," he replied, "that the most beautiful diamond of all, the diamond that is simply priceless, is the one hidden under all the rest."

The domino was the Emperor, and compliments from him were so rare that these remarks flattered me greatly.

The Queen of Naples and the Princess Pauline never forgave me for having scored so evident a triumph even in a matter of such slight importance.

The Emperor liked masked balls. He attended one or two a year, either at the house of the Lord Chancellor or at that of the Prince de Neuchatel. It might have seemed difficult to discover what pleasure he found there, for he never spoke a word.

I, however, could understand him, for I too liked them and I was not any more communicative than he was. To be able to watch people without being noticed or followed is a novel sensation for people who are always being stared at. When you are constantly surrounded with ceremony it is sometimes a pleasure to lose yourself in a crowd.

As soon as he arrived at one of the balls, he sent for me or the Queen of Naples because he thought he would be less readily recognized if he were with a woman. We would walk about without speaking. Sometimes he would ask me, "Who is that person?" I had no idea and I would try to find out.

"How are you, handsome masquerader?" or "What is your name?" were the only phrases I could think of, and my mental effort stopped there. If people guessed who we were they would step aside with a deep bow.

If not, they would turn their backs on us, exclaiming, "How silly they are!" This would amuse the Emperor as much as it did me. After an hour or two of strolling about and looking for the Empress, who was doing the same thing with the Duchesse de Montebello, we would go to supper with the Emperor, the Empress, and the prominent people who happened to be present.

Each one would relate the exploits he had performed in the ballroom. The only amusement the Emperor had had was that of not being recognized, or at least believing he was not recognized, and when people said he was delightful at a ball, that everybody wondered who he could be, this was doubtless a form of humor.

At one of these balls when I was not with the Emperor I happened to sit down to rest on a bench. I caught sight of Monsieur de Flahaut as he passed but did not venture to speak to him although I wanted to do so, for I fancied that everyone knew who I was. A young and very distinguished-looking man came and sat beside me. He seemed rather unhappy. I had seen him once or twice at my formal balls, but he had scarcely heard my voice. I spoke to him in a bantering manner.

During our talk he asked me about all the people who went by and was surprised to find that I knew so many of them. I aroused his curiosity. He did not want to leave and overwhelmed me with questions:

"What do you do all day? Are you married? Have you brothers, or sisters, or children?" Each of his questions made me withdraw into myself. In the midst of this frivolous scene, which had momentarily distracted my thoughts from my troubles, these questions recalled the realities of life. Pain accompanied such reminders and took my mind far from the gay merrymaking which surrounded me and which for an instant had assuaged my distress.

Especially when I heard the phrase, "How many children have you?" the loss of my son came so vividly to my mind that I could not conceal my grief. Forgetting that I was masked I was embarrassed at succumbing so easily to my feelings in the presence of a stranger. For I was unable completely to conceal my emotions and I regretted the fact. To disclose the secrets of your heart, no matter how innocent they may be, as was the case in the present instance, is to reveal too much; it robs friendship of something to which it alone is entitled.

I hastened to escape from the sympathy of this young man and his assiduities. I made him give me his word he would not try to discover my identity and I left with my companions. I do not know whether he kept his promise, but very shortly afterwards at a ball I saw him looking at me earnestly.

Later he wrote me a passionate letter, telling me that he had been in Holland and heard General Bruno speak about me. My sorrows had made a deep impression on him. In looking at the places where I had lived, he came to have only one wish, to meet someday the woman who people told him had been so unhappy, whom he loved without having seen and to whose service he wished henceforward to devote the rest of his life.

I was so much upset by this letter that I decided to ask Monsieur de Flahaut's advice. He told me that men were presumptuous, that they rarely believe in a woman's virtue, that one must be on one's guard against them and especially must never reply to their letters. I followed his advice, but I was worried at the idea that this young man could have misjudged my character since he dared to talk about love to me.

Moreover, since it is generally considered that persons of higher rank are always the first to make advances I felt that I was almost to blame because I had been the first to speak, this in spite of the fact that our talk had been quite a simple one and his letter had received no answer.

Soon I learned he was unhappy; my silence had only further inflamed his passion instead of, as I had hoped, calming it. He even dared to call on my ladies in waiting and appeared to be quite desperate. I was deeply troubled and my only thought was how I could cure him.

Since this method had succeeded with others, one day I asked him to call and said: "Sir, my high rank may have made an impression on your imagination, but you cannot be in love with someone you do not know. Not only do I repulse your advances, I do not believe you are sincere. If you imagined that I might be attracted toward you because I spoke to you at the masked ball, you are mistaken. It all happened by chance. I cannot laugh at sorrow, but I cannot admit exaggerated sentimentality. Prove to me that I deserve your esteem by ceasing to think about me.

I promise you to respect you under those conditions." With that I turned away. When I repeated this conversation to Monsieur de Flahaut he said "You believe that this is the way to make people cease to care for you? The better they know you the more they will love you."

"At least they will have respect for me," I answered. "That is all I require. You may be sure that if women without any coquetry, without that air of meaning the opposite of what they say—should act as I do, they would have more friends and there would be fewer of those love affairs that end in bitter quarrels."

I was again right in this case, for the young man afterwards told me that I had done him a great service in speaking to him frankly, and later he proved to me his sincere devotion.

CHAPTER XI

FROM THE CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA TO THE FIRST ABDICATION (1812-1814)

The Carnival of 1812 —Eugene in Paris—Napoleon's Return from Russia—Eugene and the Grande Armee—The Retreat from Russia—The Carnival of 1813—The Death of Madame de Broc at Aix-en-Savoie—Hopes of Peace—The Invasion—The Imperial Treasure—Napoleon Sets Out on the Campaign of France—Paris Is Threatened—March 28—The Departure of the Empress—The Departure of the Queen At Glatigny, Trianon and Rambouillet—News of the Emperor—The Queen at Rambouillet—Empress Marie Louise—The Departure for Malmaison.

NEVER has the carnival been as brilliant as that of the winter of 1812. Balls and receptions followed one another constantly and it seemed as though their clamor were intended to cover the silent preparations for the most formidable military expedition that had ever been undertaken.

People kept leaving Paris so frequently that everyone's attention turned north. France was contented. All ambitions were satisfied, all desires fulfilled. Suddenly a spirit of restlessness appeared.

The Emperor could not ignore it. His various police departments and the letters he received from members of all political parties informed him of the state of public opinion. He alone read his secret reports and burned them at once. He never either answered them or criticized them, but kept informed of exactly what was being said.

Although he sometimes admitted the wisdom of some of the advice, his farseeing mind discarded everything that might turn him from his ultimate goal, the final defeat of England and the triumph of France. His plans had been made. He presented them so skillfully and with such strong arguments that at his Cabinet council he obtained everyone's approval. But France, unable to hear his voice, distrusted the idea of a war which she did not desire.

The Emperor persisted in thinking that it was the last effort required, that it would lead to a final peace. He thought that French courage could achieve anything. And he allowed nothing to interfere with his plans. My brother was called to Paris. He frankly pointed out the state of public opinion and the general irritation of the countries through which he had so often passed.

The Emperor did not say a word in reply. It was only in the Cabinet Council that he allowed matters to be discussed. Eugene told me how much he regretted this. He was worried also about the reason for which he had been summoned to Paris.

The Emperor wished to make him Regent of France during his absence. When he informed my brother of this, he looked at him hard. He could not doubt his loyalty, but the post to which he was appointing Eugene was an all important one.

My brother replied that he would prefer to remain in command of his army corps. As the Emperor felt that a nation which is discontented needs new objects for its affections, and because

rumors of Eugene's nomination had been received with too much joy, nothing more was said about it.

The Emperor could not be jealous. No one was his equal. Yet the lesson of history, with which his fine mind was so familiar, had taught him all too well to guess men's motives and to distrust them.

He had seen popularity arouse ambition even in the most humble person. Consequently, he was always looking for the man on whom he could most thoroughly rely. When he had discovered him and advanced him in rank the Emperor still took care to keep him dependent upon him both for fortune and for future advancement.

If public opinion, which knows no law, became too enthusiastic about someone, the Emperor would take care to show less favor toward him, to dole it out sparingly, for he was aware of the importance of every one of his acts and foresaw their results.

If a feeble monarch is wrong not to be more suspicious of those who are too ambitious, a ruler who is strong makes an equal mistake not to rely more completely on disinterested devotion.

Under the reign of a great man it too often happens that everything revolves around him. Others do not count. Their importance lessens as his own increases.

He comes to consider those about him as efficient machines; he uses them, lays them aside, picks them up again and will only be guided by his own intuitions. In the end he finds himself surrounded by men whose value he has destroyed by refusing them more responsibility.

The day comes when he is obliged to let them act for themselves. They fall and, although not seeking to betray him, they do so. My brother was the one man the Emperor should have left in France.

The reasons I have just outlined and the intrigues which exaggerated Eugene's popularity made him refrain from doing so.

He placed the High Chancellor at the head of affairs and left for Russia. The Empress accompanied him as far as Dresden where he met the rulers of Austria and Prussia.

I watched my brother leave, I saw the other two men I cared for depart and I felt very badly. We feared even victories since they would unavoidably bring sorrow to a few more families and we desired only that happiness which is to be found in peace.

The attention which the youth of my children forced me to bestow on them was my only refuge from these gloomy thoughts. I always had to have them with me and I took them with me to the springs at Aix-la-Chapelle.

My oldest son had scarlet fever there. Besides my other fatigues nursing him day and night prevented the waters doing me very much good. Those at Spa proved more efficacious. My mother had

gone to Milan to be with my sister-in-law, who gave birth to a daughter.

The Queen of Naples ruled over her dominions in the absence of the King, who was with the Emperor. The other princesses were at different health resorts.

I was obliged to return to be with the Empress Marie Louise, who people considered was being left too much alone. She came to see me sometimes at Saint-Leu and liked it very much there. She frequently received news from the Emperor and generally passed it on to me.

Her affection and her anxiety about him seemed to me sincere, and I appreciated her sharing our uneasiness. The life of all of us women was really a pitiful one. All France seemed to be in Russia. Our desires, our fears, our prayers—all were directed there.

The nation had never been so widely separated from its defenders. The distance at which war was being waged increased its terrors. There were many complaints against the man who had carried it so far afield.

He should have forgiven them. Sorrow is a bad counselor by which to judge of vast projects. As yet it only began to make itself heard, but the situation grew more serious the day when Fortune, weary of being always on our side, seemed suddenly to desert us, chose to set at naught both our skill and our courage and even raised the elemental forces of nature to combat our armies.

How completely our grandeur was overthrown! How our pride was humbled! On that day the Northern Empire, which had apparently retreated in confusion, turned on us.

Only a few broken, scattered fragments of France's great host came back—broken men, but heroes all. Our distress, our grief was as overwhelming as the disaster that had caused it. Everything was swathed in mourning. Equally dismayed and surprised at having met with defeat the French nation, which so long had allowed itself blindly to obey one man's commands, now arose and seemed ready to play a part in shaping its own destiny. As for that man, whose heart was broken, but whose genius was necessary to limit and combat the effects of the general disaster, he arrived in Paris almost as soon as the news of what had happened. His sudden appearance, his firm attitude kept people in order.

No more criticism was heard. Our humiliation was too great to express itself in complaints, and national pride forbade counting the cost of new sacrifices.

As soon as I heard of the Emperor's return I went to the Tuileries. He seemed to me wearied, worried, but not disheartened. I had often seen him lose his temper about some trifle such as a door opened when it should have been shut or vice versa, a room too brightly or too dimly lighted. But in times of difficulty or misfortune he was completely master of his nerves.

I inquired anxiously whether the disasters which had befallen the army had been as serious as his reports had stated. He replied with a tone of repressed emotion, "I told the entire truth."

"But," I exclaimed, "we were not the only ones to suffer. Our enemies must also have suffered very severe losses."

"That is certainly true," he answered, "but it does not console me." I asked for news of my brother, and he replied in rather a distant manner.

I easily guessed the reason for this attitude. During the campaign the Duc de Rovigo had lacked details of what was going on at the front. Paris was becoming uneasy. He heard that my brother's secretary had sent word to his family by a dispatch bearer who had just arrived from Russia, and he wished to know what news those letters contained.

He hastened to make inquiries. The letter that was shown him contained much praise of my brother's conduct. It mentioned among other things that his army corps had been the only one that offered any resistance at Maloyaroslavets, where it had met with considerable success.

The Emperor had warmly praised the attitude of these troops. The Duc de Rovigo gave orders to have an account of this action printed in full in the newspapers in order to reassure the Parisians. My mother, in reading how gallantly her son had behaved, had been much pleased, but I could not understand why the article did not appear in the official account of the battle, especially as the following day the Bulletin described the advantages won by my brother's army corps without mentioning his name.

The Duc de Rovigo was likewise struck by this difference between the two accounts of the same battle. Fearing that he would be accused of having himself been the author of these flattering remarks, he wrote the Emperor that it was my brother's secretary who was responsible for their appearing in print.

I heard from Monsieur de Lavallette that the Emperor was extremely vexed at what he considered a little trick on our part. Indeed, he was so annoyed that sometime later, speaking of it to Marshal Marmont, he said: "I gave everyone his just deserts in the way of praise, in spite of the compliments some people had printed about themselves in the newspapers."

The Duc de Vicence, who alone had accompanied the Emperor from Vilna to Paris, came to see me the day after his arrival. I spoke to him about my brother and how worried I was to have the latter serving under the King of Naples.

He gave me many details of the misfortunes which had befallen our forces and told me how greatly Eugene and Marshal Ney had distinguished themselves, especially by their presence of mind at a time when everybody was distraught.

"But," he added, "I earnestly advise you to talk only about what Marshal Ney did and not mention your brother."

He said nothing more on this subject. My sister-in-law in a letter to the Emperor also expressed her anxiety because her husband was serving under the King of Naples.

The Emperor speaking to me about this letter said, "These young wives, if people paid any attention to them, would ruin their husbands."

I did not doubt in view of all these incidents that the Emperor, believing some false report, distrusted the loyalty and attachment of Eugene and judged him in a way that was unworthy of both their characters, ideas which I was powerless to efface at once, although I was well aware that they would not last long. So it turned out, for when Murat suddenly abandoned the army to return to Naples and when the discouragement of the troops had reached its height the Emperor turned to Eugene.

The latter by his tireless activity managed to gather together the scattered fragments of the various units and form these wounded, badly equipped and dispirited men into an army which could still hold in check both the enemies which were pursuing them and the others which rose about them on every side.

Never had a general found himself in as critical and difficult a situation. Eugene devoted himself to his task without any thought of fame or honors but animated solely by a desire to do his duty. The Emperor was forced to recognize the fact that he was deeply indebted to my brother, but he never admitted it.

We were all of us anxious to obtain full details as to what had happened in Russia and we felt both sorrowful and proud on hearing these tales of disaster and heroism. I enjoyed anecdotes about incidents proving the nobility of human nature and was deaf to those which displayed it in an unfavorable light.

I never wearied of hearing about those episodes which increased my admiration for the soldiers of France.

For instance, there was the case of a young man named Bourgoing who at the risk of his own life had refused to abandon his brother, who was ill, and by his persistent courage had conquered the terrible assaults both of the climate and of the enemy.

Monsieur de Brack and Monsieur de Cubieres had undertaken to save a poor woman and her child. Scarcely had they secured a horse and a sleigh when the horse died, and they found themselves surrounded by Cossacks and obliged to continue to defend themselves in spite of their exhausted condition.

My brother, thanks to his presence of mind, performed a skillful maneuver and succeeded by taking advantage of the darkness in silently extricating his entire force from the hostile troops, who had completely surrounded him, thus frustrating them of their prey.

Marshal Ney attempted the same feat, but he was less fortunate. He lost his way in the snow-storm. My brother when he rejoined the Emperor heard that the Marshal's troops had probably either perished or been taken prisoners. The Emperor was inconsolable.

"I would have given all the wealth I possess to have avoided such a misfortune," he exclaimed. My brother and his soldiers undertook to save the situation.

Although they had just escaped from those same dangers and were in the greatest need of rest, they set out. My brother led the way in the direction in which he supposed the Marshal to be.

Never was there a more touching scene than that when the two armies met. Never was the sight of the imperial eagles under which they had both fought received with more enthusiasm. Rescuers and rescued were equally overjoyed.

On the mountain of Vilna, which the ice rendered impassable, it was necessary to leave the treasure-chests of the Guard behind. The silver was entrusted to the soldiers who happened to be there at the time.

All brought it back intact, not a penny was missing, and yet all of them were utterly destitute and undergoing the most terrible privations. There was also the well-known story of the little orphan girl of Vilna whose life the soldiers saved and whom they adopted and cared for as tenderly as a mother might have done. It is pleasant to recall all these instances of courage and self-sacrifice. Many others doubtless will never be known, but I am glad to be able to remind people by the few incidents just mentioned that in our day men still know how to perform deeds of courage and abnegation, and that in the midst of our most serious misfortunes, Frenchmen have always displayed these sterling qualities.

Malet's conspiracy was one of the things which had most alarmed the Emperor during his absence and had the most to do in deciding his return to Paris. After people had recovered from the shock of Malet's rash enterprise they were much amused at the way Monsieur Pasquier, prefect of police, and the Duc de Rovigo had looked when they were dragged off to prison by men who a few hours previously had themselves been behind the bars. But the Emperor felt that those who should have protected his dynasty had shown a contemptible spirit of vacillation and lack of decision in this affair.

He was greatly concerned about it. Meanwhile enormous plans were under way to make good our losses, and those who had wondered why the Emperor had returned to Paris soon learned the reason on the battlefields of Lutzen and Bautzen.

As all the officers reappeared in Paris after the vicissitudes, they had undergone I had the great joy of seeing Monsieur de Flahaut again. His behavior while in active service had been warmly admired by everyone. In such times of general calamity, a man shows his true colors, displays his qualities and weaknesses and proves that he is of either less or greatly more than average value.

Since egoism is our strongest trait the man who sacrifices himself on behalf of others deserves to be honored. Monsieur de Flahaut's man servant, who was old and feeble, had remained behind at the attack on the mountain of Vilna. The Cossacks were close at hand. The mountain was crowded with men and slippery with ice. Monsieur de Flahaut had already crossed it once with the rest of the Emperor's staff when he heard that his servant was in danger of being left behind. He returned over the ground he had just crossed, lifted him on his shoulders and with great difficulty managed to rejoin the star place the valet in a sleigh.

Such a spirit of self-sacrifice touched my heart but did not surprise me on the part of the man who had won my affections.

The Emperor had frequently sent Monsieur de Flahaut on special missions and being satisfied with the way in which he performed them appointed him his aide-de-camp. I often met him at court and therefore found it less gloomy there than it would otherwise have seemed. Is there any place which the presence of the person we love does not make more attractive?

The carnival season that year was not very animated in spite of the balls held as usual in every great capital. My brother's position was a constant source of anxiety to my mother and myself. He had retired to Magdeburg, where he was reorganizing his troops.

The entire French cavalry had been practically wiped out in the Russian campaign. My brother was obliged to place himself at the head of his staff to make even the simplest reconnaissance and he exposed himself as though he were an ordinary private.

A Polish colonel named Klicki, when pursued by the Cossacks, owed his life to my brother's presence of mind, Eugene having shot down the nearest of the Colonel's pursuers just as the Cossack was about to fall upon him.

It always requires tact to advise a soldier to be careful. To make Eugene give attention to what I had to say I wrote appropriate verses and sent him good advice set to music.

The Emperor went to the Trianon for a few days. While there he had a fall from his horse, which alarmed us greatly and obliged him to remain in bed. He sent for the Empress and me to have dinner at his bedside and said to me, "Well, well, Hortense, what a great piece of news it would have been for the English if I had been killed!"

I was surprised to hear him speak of the English. I had forgotten all about them, but they were the most serious problem of all, and the Emperor had them constantly in mind while making his important plans.

Our losses had been so great in Russia that I was convinced they would cause the Emperor to relinquish his vast undertakings, which formed the real reason for his campaigns and to whose success so many victories had already contributed. I felt sure that he would make concessions in order to obtain a much-needed peace, a peace which was as necessary to France as it was to the rest of Europe.

Perhaps one more victory was still required to convince the enemy that the Russian reverses had not crushed either his force or his genius, but I thought that a peace-treaty, even though it were less brilliant than he could have made before that unfortunate campaign, would immediately follow his next military success.

Naturally observant and having always been interested in trying to discover in advance what the Emperor would do, I was so sure that one more combat would put an end to the hostilities that I definitely ordered the furniture of a room which I had been wanting for a long time, after receiving news of the battle of Lutzen.

Hence, I was entirely sincere in the sentiments I expressed during a conversation I had with the Prince of Schwarzenberg [the Austrian Ambassador] following the return of the Emperor. We never received the foreign ambassadors except at our large receptions and in a formal manner.

The Emperor would not have allowed any intimacy with them. Consequently, I was much surprised when one evening while I was at home with only my ladies in waiting in attendance, my valet-de-chambre announced the Prince of Schwarzenberg and Comte de Bubna. De Bubna had just arrived from Vienna, having received a post at the French court.

Our servants had by accident allowed the visitors to come upstairs, and they were Waiting for me in my drawing-room. I could not refuse to see them and greeted them as though I was not aware of the unexpected nature of their visit. I quickly noticed that they had something important to say to me privately.

After a few banal remarks the Prince approached me and said in a low voice: "Madame, you who are so familiar with the Emperor's character, do you really think we can expect him to make peace?

"We wish he would do so. Europe is weary. But the Emperor, if he wins a victory, will he not seek to regain all his former advantages?"

I replied that I was convinced that the Emperor must score a success in order to restore the confidence of his troops and wipe out the memory of our recent disasters, and I added that I felt sure the Emperor also realized how greatly all of Europe needed rest ; he was as wise an administrator as he was a great general ; to assure the happiness of his subjects was a task worthy of his genius and one which he never neglected ; up to now his strength had always lain in the fact that he gave France what she wanted and if she demanded peace at the present time he would not stand in the way.

"Have you not enough influence with him to make him realize that peace is necessary?" asked the Prince.

"He obeys only the commands of public opinion which become his own wishes," I replied.

"Then, too, my youth and my position as an obedient daughter have always prevented my offering him any advice."

"In that case perhaps Prince Eugene, who rules a great country, who knows what his subjects wish, will speak firmly to the Emperor and tell him the entire truth."

"My brother more than anyone else realizes how necessary peace has become. I shall write to him. He will bring up the subject, you may be sure of that, but, I repeat, the Emperor is too wise to need any advice.

One more military victory and he will devote himself to insuring the prosperity of his subjects." Monsieur de Bubna repeated about the same things to me as the Prince of Schwarzenberg. I replied to him in these same terms and when they took their leave, I was firmly convinced that peace was in the hands of Emperor Napoleon and that he would agree to it.

He did indeed intend to do so after having won several battles, but he was doubtless reluctant to make too important sacrifices. Perhaps, too, the enemy's conditions grew more harsh as our forces grew weaker and theirs consequently became stronger.

Monsieur de Flahaut, the Emperor's aide-de-camp, was sent to the Viceroy bearing special messages. He came to see me before he left to inquire if I had any letters to send my brother and told me the Emperor wished to have me mention when I wrote Eugene how pleased he was at the way in which my brother had behaved.

Eugene concentrated his troops, those of the Emperor advanced and joined them at Lutzen, where the famous combat took place which so nobly retrieved our former defeats.

At the spot where Gustavus Adolphus had been killed and near where a monument has been erected to him Eugene met the Emperor. It was here the latter dismounted and embraced him. My brother felt that he had achieved all his desires in thus having taken part in a battle toward whose success his troops had largely contributed and in having received the expression of everyone's admiration.

Before leaving for the front the Emperor had appointed the Empress to the post of Regent with a council of advisors. We were all present when she took the oath of office.

I went to take the waters at Aix-les-Bains. As a result of the constant anxiety we were in regarding the safety of those whom we loved my health grew steadily worse and demanded care. After all I had gone through I was only able to keep alive, thanks to those healing waters, which every summer helped me to recover a little of my strength, and thus be ready to face new trials.

I heard of the death of General Duroc and the news affected me deeply. I had admired his firm, loyal character and his frank outspokenness even though it at times made him seem positively rude. He was a slave to his duties and scrupulously honest.

Completely loyal to the interests of his master, he never hesitated to express his personal opinions and he knew so well the intentions of the Emperor that he was frequently able to decide just how far certain orders were to be carried out.

He even ventured at times to delay their execution when he felt that they were due to a sudden fit of temper. A king would be more loved if he only had servants like Duroc.

Such courtiers deserve to be called friends. The Emperor knew this and did everything he could to render the General's last moments less painful and he sincerely regretted his death.

The General's wife besides possessing the sterling qualities of her husband was also very charming. Her common sense and healthy point of view made her a notable member of the group of young court ladies who enjoyed a well-deserved and favorable reputation.

Her friendship and confidence toward me allowed me to judge her merits as they deserved. But the one who by her graces and her gifts was the most exquisite of them all was soon to disappear, and her loss was to be one of the cruellest blows unkind Fate ever dealt me.

Since her husband's death and my return from Holland Adele had remained constantly with me. She devoted herself to her duties as friend and comforter. All her time was given up to the delicate attentions she lavished on me, her efforts to encourage my drooping spirits, and the numberless charitable acts she performed on behalf of all sorts of unfortunate people.

Often I have seen her take off a brilliant court dress and abandon pleasures that would have seemed to many to be altogether absorbing in order to take alms to beggars living in the most miserable hovels. She had accompanied me to Aix. Together we went to look at a waterfall. I crossed the stream first on an unsteady plank. As I turned what a tragic spectacle met my eyes! Great God, could it be true! My friend, swept away by the current, vanished beneath my very eyes.

I succeeded only later in recovering her inanimate body. The officers of my household, my servants attempted to drag me away from the scene where the tragedy had taken place. I would not leave. In spite of everything, I would not give up all hope. Yet I knew it was fruitless. She had departed.

What anguish filled my bosom! I found myself suddenly more utterly alone than ever, now that I had been robbed of that friend who helped me to endure my sufferings. The thought of the future terrified me. No longer would I have her mind to support my fainting spirit, no more would I have her gentle nature to calm the tempestuous emotions of my own character.

I accused Providence of treating me unjustly and I accused myself of having insisted too constantly on my own troubles to this incomparable friend, and having never made it clear enough to her how dear she was to me.

I felt that in the past I had indeed been selfish since then, at least, she had been by my side. My mother when she heard what had happened wished to hurry to me.

She guessed the extent of my sorrow and sent her chamberlain, Comte de Turpin, to inquire as to my health. The Empress Marie Louise also wrote me a letter, sympathizing with me in my misfortune.

Everyone shared my sorrow because everyone loved the person whose loss made me so unhappy. But for me what consolation was there? I founded a hospital at Aix with Sisters of Charity to attend to the sick people.

I had the body of my unhappy friend laid at rest in a chapel at Saint-Leu. Thus, I kept her near me. I could not heal the pain this dreadful loss had caused me, but I sought to assuage it by acts of charity. I felt that I was helping her by imitating her example. On my return to Saint-Leu my mother brought me my children.

Her affectionate care touched me but could not console me. I went to Paris to see Adele's father and her sisters, Madame Gamot and the Marechale Ney. Our interview was a heartrending one.

Madame Campan also was inconsolable. She felt that in losing this pupil whom she had brought up and of whom she was so proud she had lost a daughter. Yet after all it was I who had suffered the most grievous loss. Sea-baths were prescribed me for my health. I went to Dieppe with my children from whom I could no longer bear to be separated.

They were all I still cared for in life or, at least, the only beings who still needed me. King Joseph, having been obliged to abandon his Spanish kingdom, had retired to his country estate at Mortefontaine.

I made him a visit there. The Queen shared his retirement. She was admirable in her gentleness, kindness of heart and self-abnegation. She shared my indifference to rank and position and like me had found they failed to bring her happiness.

Her husband, whose character was totally unlike that of Louis, made her unhappy but from quite different reasons. Without any respect for her and solely interested in other women he neglected her and even was frequently rude to her. Her domestic sorrows reminded me of what I had endured so long. The sight of this unhappy woman living as though she were in a prison recalled me to myself.

I remembered the advice of my friend when she reproached me for not appreciating more fully the pleasures that I still possessed. I felt that I had been punished for this attitude and I turned toward my children, those dearly loved beings who needed my care and my energy.

"At least," I said, "I shall bring them up as I think best. I am free to spend my time as I see fit; I am able to weep undisturbed. Although life may not be pure joy at least it is no longer altogether painful. May Providence spare me and not punish me because I demanded too much and because I remembered only the suffering it has inflicted on me."

These thoughts and the public events which made it necessary for me to be brave helped me attain that state of resignation in which, while we do not forget our misfortunes, we yet find the strength to bear them.

While at Mortefontaine I saw the Queen of Westphalia, whose husband made her happy and who enjoyed to the full all the agreeable things life has to offer and those which rank confers on you. The loss of her kingdom was the one blow which had ever fallen on her, and as she had everything else she could desire the only thing that interested her was what went on in the fields of politics.

Consequently, this was all we talked about, and we all agreed as to the need for a speedy peace. The Emperor was at Dresden. We believed he could conclude negotiations there. Perhaps it was not in his power to do so.

Perhaps he depended too much on the strength of his armies, on the resources of France, on the alliance with Austria, on his own good fortune. Did he fear that if he made any concessions, he should be considered weak, and that if people formed this opinion the hatred of his power, which till now had been suppressed, would burst out? Or did he feel himself defeated unless he imposed his own terms?

Perhaps future generations will be able to decide where his fault lay, and whether he should have made peace when the opportunity arose, since national pride had been satisfied at Lutzen and Bautzen. But England led and Austria followed.

The Emperor's subjects grew restless under a too continuous military domination. Kings on their thrones forgot who had placed them there, soldiers in the field went over to the enemy, and the allies of yesterday became the enemies of today. People listened only to the voice of treason and sought to satisfy the promptings of revenge. The army, having been obliged to retire in the face of overwhelming numbers at Leipzig, withdrew to Mayence.

On the way it had to overcome all sorts of obstacles which became constantly more numerous. The number of our enemies grew as our difficulties increased.

Wherever the troops actually fought they were victorious, but the only result was that they eventually found themselves on their native soil, obliged to defend it against the invaders. Hardly had they arrived when an epidemic broke out which carried off a large number of those whom war had spared.

The Emperor returned to Saint Cloud. He seemed entirely absorbed by negotiations for peace. France desired it. Worn out by her latest efforts she seemed unwilling to undertake new ones.

Her soldiers, exhausted by the setbacks they had suffered during the last two campaigns, began to wonder if this was all the reward they could hope to obtain.

The buoyancy of the days when they were constantly victorious vanished, and discouragement took its place. Adherents to the republican form of government, who had been obliged to remain silent so long as the country was prosperous, now began to make themselves heard and believed that the opposition party could obtain political concessions.

It was not the moment they should have sought to secure them. That might have been done when France, having attained the highest point of her military glory, could have dreamed of still further perfecting her political system.

At present it was either too soon or too late. The approach of the invader should have united all parties for the defense of the country, and all powers should have been entrusted to the one man capable of doing this. But people were only conscious of how heavily this man's will had weighed in the balance of their destiny for many years.

They had forgotten his gifts as a leader. This is a common enough mistake, but one which always proves fatal. What could be more harmful than this political division which placed us at the mercy of jealous and hostile forces? Our leader, notwithstanding what might be considered his faults, was more likely to rescue us than the foreigner, in spite of all the latter's fine promises.

Thus, the Emperor found himself alone in his struggle against both his personal enemies and those of France. Had he received the same support as in the past he might still have proved victorious. His brothers gathered round him. My husband, who had constantly refused to leave foreign territory, now that he saw these countries declaring war on France arrived to add his efforts to those of the rest of the family.

He again stayed with his mother. I did not see him once. When my husband had heard the decree of the foreign monarchs that France must surrender all territories beyond her natural frontiers, he believed that Holland could not fail to become again independent, and he had proposed to the Emperor to withdraw his abdication and reassume the Dutch crown.

The Emperor had refused. Since the death of Grand Marshal Duroc that post had remained unoccupied. The Emperor liked Monsieur de Flahaut and had been much pleased with his behavior on the different missions intrusted to him during the last campaign. He thought of appointing him to this post. The Duc de Rovigo, who considered that he was more or less entitled to it himself, spoke to the Emperor about Monsieur de Flahaut's affection for me, which was generally known in Paris.

The Emperor wished his Grand Marshal to be someone entirely devoted to his own interests. He feared any influence that was not his own. He had intrusted Monsieur de Flahaut with a certain mission which required secrecy.

The Duc de Rovigo called on me and in the course of our conversation looked at me fixedly while speaking of this mission as though I must know what he was referring to. Although little accustomed to concealing my thoughts I was obliged to make an effort and appear entirely ignorant of what he meant in order not to injure the prospects of the man who kept nothing from me. I suspected that this little

stratagem had been employed to discover how deeply Monsieur de Flahaut took me into his confidence.

Finally, Savary remained head of the police department and the Emperor appointed General Bertrand, who was already his aide-de-camp, grand marshal of the palace. Everyone approved of his choice, for Bertrand was a gifted man, unpretentious in his manner, kind-hearted, loyal and upright.

He had married a Mademoiselle Dillon, who was related to my family. I had made the match at Saint-Leu, and my almoner the Bishop of Osmond had blessed their union. Mademoiselle Dillon was high-spirited, with lofty moral standards and nobility of heart. Very demonstrative in all her feelings, she was particularly so as regarded her violent affection for her husband.

The happiness of their marriage was a proof of the fact that contrasting characters are not an obstacle to domestic joy. In the meanwhile, nothing more was heard about an approaching peace, which was what everyone was hoping for.

France was uneasy, the political parties were becoming active again. In order to compel them all to share his views the Emperor in the past had used violence. When arguments did not succeed, he used force. And force succeeded. The young men belonging to the former nobility who were obliged to enlist against the wishes of their parents became our partisans from the moment they shared the glory of the new regime. In the present instance, however, neglecting the older members of that nobility, which he neither needed nor feared, the Emperor called to the colors all the youths belonging to the richest and most influential families of France.

His orders for this enforced draft were already severe. Unfortunately, the manner in which they were executed was even harsher and more inconsiderate. The result was the arousing of bitter animosities. Victories would have saved everything, defeats envenomed all public complaints. The benefits of the law-giver, the exploits of the general were speedily forgotten.

People only remembered the acts of a man ever anxious to conquer more territory. Even we, the members of his own family, who were used to letting him dictate to us in everything, now dared to protest and blame him openly for continuing a war which perhaps he lacked the power of bringing to an end.

The Prince of Benevento [Monsieur de Talleyrand], who for a long time had felt himself to be in disgrace, recognized the weakness of the Emperor's position and sought to take advantage of it. He had at his disposal the means of doing much harm and he employed them all.

A man who hates another but lacks courage to combat him openly rarely lets slip an opportunity for which he has long been secretly waiting. Meanwhile the crusade of the northern races, allied one to another, at last set foot on the soil of France, which had so long remained inviolate.

A panic such as never occurred before seized the capital. The enemy actually in France. Where is our army? What forces can we oppose to such a formidable invasion? As a matter of fact no steps had been taken to defend the city. I had gone to attend mass at the Tuileries.

The Duchesse de Montebello, apparently much alarmed, spoke to me, saying "Madame, have you heard the news? The allied armies have crossed the Rhine. Paris is panic-stricken. What can the Emperor be doing?"

The Empress, whom the Duchess had informed of what was happening, appeared to be much upset. "I seem to attract misfortune wherever I go," she said to me. "All those who have had anything to do with me, either intimately or at a distance, have suffered from this more or less. Since my childhood I have constantly been obliged to escape hurriedly from where I happened to be."

I returned in the evening to the family dinner party. The Emperor was alone with the Empress when I arrived. He was holding her in his arms and seemed to be, teasing her. "Ah, there you are Hortense," he exclaimed laughingly as I entered. "Are people as frightened as all that in Paris? Do you already see the Cossacks riding down the street? Well they are not here yet, and we have not forgotten our trade as soldiers. Don't worry," he added, speaking to his wife. "We will go again to Vienna and beat Papa Francis."

At dinner his son came in at dessert time. He repeated several times to the little boy, "Come on and beat Papa. Francis." And the child repeated this phrase so frequently and so clearly that the Emperor seemed delighted and laughed heartily.

After dinner he sent for the Prince of Neuchatel, "Now then, Berthier, go over there," he said, pointing to his table covered with green cloth. "We shall have to begin once more our campaign of Italy."

The Emperor dictated steadily for an hour as we sat there, speaking without any notes and outlining the way the army was to be organized which was to assemble on the plains of Chalons.

He sent for the four generals in command of the Guard and inquired how many men were on sick-leave, how many were available for active service. He paid particular attention to the reorganizing of this part of his forces. All this took time. Finally, he dismissed everyone and turning to us he said:

"Well, ladies, are you satisfied now? Do you think it is going to be as easy to catch us as all that?"

As the national finances were in difficulties at that moment the Emperor took the funds required for this new campaign from his private fortune. The method in which his household accounts were kept was so perfect that it might have served as model to all the departments of the state. The Emperor was extremely thrifty in his personal expenses, very liberal where others were concerned.

He frequently quoted the example of Charlemagne, who sold even the herbs from his private garden, and the Emperor dismissed his chamberlain Monsieur de Remusat from the post of controller of his wardrobe because the chamberlain had spent over 80,000 francs in a year on it.

One day the Emperor spoke to us about this and said "Can you imagine such a sum being spent on me who only wear an officer's undress uniform? That was why I told Monsieur de Turenne to look after my wardrobe expenses. I limited them to 24,000 francs per year and I do not intend to exceed this sum."

As he was extremely particular about his linen and as he lost a great deal of it while at the front, Monsieur de Turenne was forced to resort to all sorts of expedients to keep within this figure. He even had pages run after the Emperor's gloves if he happened to forget them in his carriages.

It was by practicing such personal economy that the Emperor was able to come to the rescue of his public treasury. He frequently made gifts of two or three hundred thousand francs to his marshals and generals in order to enable them to pay their debts, or buy an estate or town house. Before I left for Holland, he attended a ball I gave at my house. "You are not as elegant as the other princesses. Does not your husband make you a big enough allowance? Well, then, I shall set aside a hundred thousand francs a year for you from my personal budget."

Nevertheless, it may be mentioned that he kept his gifts within reasonable limits. The Emperor's departure took place shortly after the scene I have just related.

One morning all the officers of the National Guard were summoned to the Salle des Marechaux. The Emperor had the King of Rome brought in, took him in his arms, and with the Empress beside him, and surrounded by the rest of his family, announced that he was leaving for the front and declared his confidence in the National Guard of Paris to whom he entrusted the defense of the capital and the protection of those who were dearest to him.

The enthusiasm which greeted him was quite sincere, the more so as the position was a critical one and the interests of the individuals and the state both seemed to be entirely dependent on his military genius.

I saw men's eyes filled with tears, and a few days later the same men not only abandoned the imperial cause but insulted the Emperor in the most outrageous manner. That evening I was alone with the Emperor and the Empress.

She kept crying all the time, and the Emperor kissed her repeatedly in order to console her. He had us go into his study. While we were there warming ourselves by the fire, he sorted out his papers, burning a large number of letters.

Every time he came near the chimney, he embraced his wife saying, "Do not be gloomy. Trust me. Do you think I have forgotten my profession entirely?" And he added while he held his wife tightly in his arms, "I will beat Papa Francis again. Don't cry; I will be home soon."

The hostile armies advanced slowly and cautiously. A conference held at Chatillon gave us some hope of a general peace-treaty being signed. I was under the impression, as a result of the calculations

the Emperor had made in our presence, that the entire force with which he was about to confront the united armies of all Europe did not amount to more than fifty or sixty thousand men.

I trembled when I thought of this small number of troops, but his genius sufficed to even the balance. Never did he display greater skill and greater energy. He seemed to be everywhere at once.

No sooner had he defeated the enemy at one point than he would be heard of seventy-five miles away, again repulsing their advance, and his army like its chief seemed to possess the gift of multiplying itself indefinitely. It was as though the defenders of the soil of France drew new strength from the ground over which they fought. Thus, it came about that at the head of a handful of heroes the Emperor was able to hold in check the hosts of the Coalition, and but for treachery he would perhaps have defeated them.

The King of Naples dared to forget all he owed the Emperor and was sufficiently mad to think he could survive the fall of his natural protector.

His wife shared his mistaken opinion. Ambition makes men blind, and a just appreciation of one's own abilities is the best guide at all times, one which prevents a person from making mistakes.

My brother, whom the Emperor had sent from Dresden to reorganize an army in Italy, defended himself vigorously. The allied monarchs offered him the same terms " as were offered Murat.

They promised that he should be allowed to keep the Italian crown if he would abandon the cause of France. There could be no doubt what his answer would be. He refused, and informed the Emperor of what had occurred.

The Emperor in return ordered him to send his wife, who was about to have another child, and his children to France. This suspicious attitude, which was, to be sure, readily understandable from a man who had just been betrayed by a member of his own family [Caroline] nevertheless annoyed my brother.

Even the slightest hint of a lack of confidence offends a man who is both loyal and sensitive. Eugene's wife refused flatly to obey the imperial orders and hastened to shut herself up in the fortress of Mantua, where she prepared to have her confinement surrounded by the horrors of war, but at least not far from her husband.

Eugene won several battles, and had it not been for the Neapolitan army he would have succeeded in creating a diversion of the main attacks that were being prepared against us, and thus, perhaps, have greatly aided the Emperor's efforts.

The French nation was in a state of great perplexity. The number of her enemies increased each day. The two sections of the legislative body, which till then had adopted a silent and obedient attitude, began to complain vehemently. They even wished to oppose the decisions of an executive who, in the course of time, had assumed absolute power.

To bring up such discussions at a time like this was to inform the enemy of our internal dissensions and place in his hands the means for accomplishing our defeat.

Before leaving Paris, the Emperor dissolved the Chamber and the Senate as they appeared to be about to interfere with his plans for national defense. People talked of despotism; the magic name of Liberty was invoked by his adversaries.

From then one everyone who opposed the Emperor adopted the title of "Liberal." Even his generals and his marshals, tired out and discouraged, added their complaints to those of the general public.

It was as though they felt their republicanism, which had so long lain dormant beneath the laurels they had won, suddenly revive. They declared themselves hostile to the Emperor's ambitious plans, forgetting that they had previously been his most devoted collaborators and the first to benefit by his ambitions.

The Emperor shared their desire for peace, but he wished it established on honorable terms. In order to obtain them new victories were necessary.

Every man has the weakness which corresponds to his natural gifts. While the Emperor was full of energy, bold in his plans and possessed a tenacity of purpose which frequently enabled him to conquer all obstacles and carry off the palm of victory, he nevertheless did not know sufficiently how to adapt his character to changing conditions.

That very inflexibility of will, which had so long been one of his qualities, now became a source of danger to him. Yet it has been said he managed to conquer his aversion to peace until he saw that it would be based on trickery and deceit.

Had peace been definitely signed at Chatillon we should have seen the Emperor as popular as ever when he returned to Paris, so eagerly did the Parisians desire his presence. But he had always been inclined to rely too much on his own military genius and the valor of the French nation.

The astounding success at Montmirail had caused his hopes to revive, and he doubtless thought he could eventually obtain still better terms for France, since he always placed his country's interests before his personal ones.

A short time before, wishing to unite all his forces, he had instructed the minister of war to write to my brother to abandon Italy in order to concentrate his troops in France.

Impatient of all delays, he sent my mother a letter asking her to mention the urgency of his request to her son. "France first," he wrote my mother. "She needs to gather all her children about her."

As soon as my brother heard what the Emperor wished, he sent his aide-de-camp Tascher to report the situation in which he found himself.

He had just gained a victory over the Austrians and scored several successes against the Neapolitans which enabled him to hold the foe in check there, while conserving the line at Mantua.

If he abandoned his position, he was in danger of seeing his forces diminish as he advanced toward France, and he was convinced that he would only succeed in bringing a handful of troops across the frontier, while at the same time the enemy would penetrate France from the direction of Italy.

Monsieur Tascher met the Emperor on the battle-field of Montmirail and stated his case. "Return immediately," replied the Emperor.

"Tell Eugene what you have seen here and tell him to hold on, to hold tight to Italy." This victory was the last one the Emperor won. He persisted, however, in his efforts to keep France from succumbing to its enemies. Only the army shared this heroic obstinacy. His soldiers did not attempt to understand what was going on; they remained faithful to their cause, to the oaths they had sworn, as though they had only one idea, one hope in life—that of defending and saving their country. But fortune was against us.

Paris had been hastily fortified. All these warlike preparations had terrified the townspeople but could not destroy the natural gaiety of the French. Other nations are serious and solemn. Misfortune does not come to them as a sudden shock.

They foresee that it may occur and their foresight gives them the courage to resist it. The Frenchman finds his strength in his native gaiety. At a time when his capital was threatened, when everyone's fortune was in danger, he still managed to jest.

People packed up and concealed their precious belongings as merrily as though they were going on a picnic. The theaters remained open till the very last minute.

The morale of the National Guard was excellent. All the Parisians had enlisted as danger drew near and were filled with a desire to defend their homes. Only a leader was lacking. The Emperor could not manage to be everywhere at once.

He was outflanking the enemy in such a way as to drive the latter toward Paris. He had inquired whether the city could hold out a couple of days. Although the answer had been in the negative, he nevertheless continued to carry out his strategic plans. But while he did so the State, deprived of the only man who could have guided its course, drifted along, the prey of any sudden accident.

The habit of too strict obedience to a superior deprives the subordinate of self-confidence and initiative. He hesitates to adopt any line of action. And action even though it leads nowhere is better than remaining motionless; it shows at least an instinct for self-preservation.

The Emperor's brothers met privately. The Empress was about to assume the position of Regent, and I, as always, found myself in the position of being an alien to the rest of the family. My drawing-room had become a workroom and we spent our time making lint for the hospitals.

These melancholy occupations had something consoling about them. Those we loved were not struggling among icy wastes.

At present they were near at hand, almost in sight, in fact; and a sister, a wife, a mother could hasten to the bedside of someone who had been wounded. This feeling that we were sharing their danger, that we were no longer entirely alone inspired us with the energy circumstances required and overcame that impression of being a useless burden which generally weakens a woman's courage.

On March 28, 1814, my head chambermaid entered my room early in the morning. Greatly excited, she announced that the enemy was not far from Paris and that wounded French soldiers were arriving at the city gates.

Although not fully informed as to what was taking place, I found it hard to believe that the Allies were so close at hand when none of my relatives had said a word to me about it.

I had spent the preceding evening with the Empress, who had not appeared to know more than I did myself. I had played a game of whist with Monsieur de Talleyrand and Monsieur Mole.

We had joked about the rumors that the enemy was on the point of capturing Paris without having taken these tales at all seriously. For the last month I had been going riding every day for my health. I went out as usual and passing along the outer boulevards I quickly became aware that what my chambermaid had said was true.

Many wounded soldiers, who were being sent to Versailles instead of to their usual quarters, assured me the enemy was not far away. This picture of war close to me, right under my eyes, made a deep impression on me.

I returned home deeply moved and conscious that the moment when everyone would need all his courage was at hand. In the evening I went, quite early, to see the Empress.

She was about to go to the cabinet meeting, where, so I was told, the question of her departure was to be discussed. I tried by a thousand arguments to persuade her not to think of leaving Paris.

I told her that if she left, she would be quite as certain to fall into the enemy's hands as if he captured the city, whereas her presence in the capital would encourage its defenders; that we must all try to be worthy of the rank we held and fulfil all our obligations to the public; that, even if we were to suffer, we must accept that suffering, but that above all she had certain duties to perform ; that only in Paris would she be safe from any danger to her person while her presence would stimulate and arouse everyone's courage and loyalty.

I was still talking to her when King Joseph entered the room. I kept on arguing, but although he listened, he did not say a word, probably because in the days of the Empire people considered all women's ideas regarding political matters as silly and worthless.

I remained alone in the drawing-room, waiting to find out what the cabinet meeting had decided. It was necessary for me to know at once in order to be able to send word to my mother, who, alone in her retreat at Malmaison, had no idea of what was taking place and whom everyone seemed to have forgotten.

The Duchesse de Montebello came to keep me company. I knew the influence she possessed with the Empress and I explained more in detail than I had been able to do before how essential it was that the Empress remain in Paris. I added that the Emperor was doubtless aware of our position and that he was too skillful a strategist not to know how to come to our rescue.

I also pointed out that the idea of the capitulation of Paris was due to a panic-stricken state of mind since on the contrary everything should be done to save the city if we were not to run the risk of utter disaster.

The Empress, who on her return from the cabinet meeting was accompanied by King Joseph and the High Chancellor, said to me half jestingly, half timidly: "I am leaving and I advise you to do the same.

The Minister of War assures me that it is impossible to defend Paris." I was dumfounded. All I was able to answer was "At least, my sister, remember you are losing your crown. I am glad to see that you are prepared to sacrifice it with a smile."

She came close to me and said in a low voice: "Perhaps you are right, but that is the decision that has just been made, and if the Emperor finds fault with anybody it is not I who deserve the blame."

It was agreed that she was to leave that very night. The High Chancellor protested against such haste. He declared no arrangements had been made, no orders had been given, and that the Empress scarcely had time to pack up a few pieces of wearing apparel. As far as he was concerned it was quite impossible to be ready in time.

The time of the departure was put off till the following morning. Even the State funds came near being over-looked, but it was decided to send them off with the Empress's party in order to avoid having to form two escorts. I approached King Joseph and inquired if anything had been said about what was to become of us.

He replied that in such delicate circumstances it behooved everyone to decide for himself what had best be done and that he had no advice to give me. I went home sick at heart at the spectacle of such a lack of courage and on catching sight of Monsieur de Lavallette I exclaimed:

"Only women know how to rise to the occasion, and when the fate of nations depends on men such as I have just seen one cannot be surprised if everything goes wrong, and if the most worthy causes are lost."

Then, adding to the actual seriousness of the situation a little spitefulness provoked by the ridiculous scene I had just witnessed, I described the High Chancellor's alarm, his absolute lack of energy at the moment when it was most necessary, and the unfortunate results of a policy which resulted in the Empress and her son driving away in broad daylight without troops, without anyone capable of giving an order and without any sort of guide, an action which resulted in their being captured two days later,

Since I was left free to do as I pleased, I was strongly tempted to take a chance and stay on in Paris. I went to bed putting off till the morrow the task of taking such an important decision. From the Tuileries I had dispatched a mounted messenger to Malmaison to inform the Empress of what had taken place and urge her to leave immediately for the Chateau of Navarre.

I had just fallen asleep when a message arrived from my husband, telling me the decision the Empress had taken. I replied that I already knew of it, and tried again to go to sleep.

A moment later he wrote another message suggesting that I accompany the Empress. I again replied that there was time enough left to make up my mind early the next morning. I thought at last I was going to get a little rest, when for the third time he sent me word ordering me to leave Paris.

Such a restless night in addition to my delicate health was not calculated to prepare me for the difficulties and dangers that lay ahead. Nevertheless, I got up and prepared to obey his wishes.

This was the more easily done as it had been for a long time a habit of mine to be ready for whatever might happen. I needed only a very few minutes to make my final preparations. The Empress had already left. I quickly felt the effect that this departure had produced.

The National Guard, who previously had been prepared to defend themselves, were now completely discouraged. The crowd of townspeople who in the morning had been demanding weapons to share in the defense appeared gravely perturbed.

They had hooted the carriage of Madame Mere when she drove off and, having witnessed all those departures in broad daylight, had become indignant at this family that seemed to be abandoning them in the hour of adversity.

One curious incident had occurred. The little King of Rome, who went out for a walk every morning, that particular day, acting from some whim which cannot really be called a premonition, had refused obstinately to leave his apartment. He caught hold of all the doors crying out as he did so, "I don't want to leave my house."

Force had to be used finally to drag him out and he sobbed violently. I have since heard that Monsieur de Talleyrand as he led the Duchesse de Montebello to the Empress's carriage and helped her step in, pressed her hand and said, "Ah, my poor Duchess, how they are fooling you!"

I was most uncertain what to do. There was no one near who could advise me or even organize my escape if I decided to make one.

The officers attached to my household were not soldiers and I was liable to be confronted with all the problems of a retreat.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère was announced. He had been wounded at Bautzen at the head of the regiment which he commanded and since then had been in Paris convalescing.

I had not seen him since his marriage. Hearing of our sudden departures and remembering that he formerly served as my brother's aide-de-camp, he called to place himself at my disposal.

His advice would have been useful to me, but I declined his offer although expressing my appreciation of it, for his devotion touched me, particularly as his family were so hostile to the Empire and as he had lately married a wife whose personal sympathies allied her very closely with the former dynasty.

A peasant brought the Duchesse de Bassano a line from her husband, who was with the Emperor, saying, "We shall soon be with you." She and several other ladies attached to the court came to see me.

All were greatly pained by the Empress's departure, which paralyzed all defensive measures. They shared my opinion that if Paris had resisted twenty-four hours the Emperor would have arrived and saved his capital.

But in spite of our conviction what could helpless and inexperienced women hope to accomplish?

Meanwhile the National Guard sent to inquire whether it was true that I too was leaving. Comte Regnaud de Saint-jean-d'Angely, who commanded a portion of these troops, was the delegate who called on me. I answered that if they were prepared to defend me, I would stay with my children.

As a matter of fact, my horses were returned to the stable, and I was prepared to run all the risks that Paris might be exposed to.

My husband, when he heard that I had not left in spite of his reiterated orders, had declined to accompany the Empress although he had been appointed to do so.

He was waiting for me to get into the carriage to follow my example as his health would not allow him to ride. That was the reason he had been appointed to accompany the Empress.

King Joseph and King Jerome remained behind to defend the city. My husband, hearing my new decision not to leave, sent me word that although in his opinion it was a mistake to abandon the national capital the Minister of War declared it would be impossible to defend it.

He added that if I persisted in remaining behind, he would come to claim his children and take them away with him, for I did not understand the risk I was running and if my children were taken as hostages, I should be responsible for anything that might happen to them.

These arguments were too convincing for me to continue to hesitate. On the other hand, I had made a promise to stay and I did not wish to break my word.

Furthermore, I was convinced that the Emperor would shortly come to our rescue, and with a little courage it would be possible for Paris to defend itself for forty-eight hours. Therefore, I did not leave in spite of all the efforts that were made to have me do so.

Toward nightfall Comte Regnaud de Saint-Jean-d'Angely, greatly excited, came and asked me on behalf of the National Guard itself not to stay in the city. He added that the enemy had already seized the heights, that the city would doubtless be bombarded and stormed the following morning ; anything was liable to take place, and not only was I to consider myself freed from my promise, but his troops would prefer to know that I and my children were out of danger.

I finally yielded, recognizing the fact at last that no one was equal to the occasion, that all had lost their heads and one could only trust in Providence and accept its decrees. My personal relations with my husband were not the least of my worries.

After all my years of domestic misery nothing alarmed me more than the thought of again being with him and being dependent on him. The idea of becoming a prisoner in the hands of strangers seemed hardly less intolerable to me than that of having to affect a reconciliation with the man who had so embittered my existence.

It seemed as if he had waited for this moment to regain possession of his prey. At least that was the thought which occurred to me, for he should have accompanied the Empress and under some pretext or other he had avoided doing so. He had ordered his horses unharnessed and would not go away without me.

One of his man servants remained on my doorstep and was to warn him the instant I prepared to leave. He seemed to attach the greatest importance to the fact of my not remaining in Paris. His uneasiness in regard to the fate of his children made this anxiety seem natural enough.

Tormented by all these worries I stepped into my carriage at eight o'clock in the evening." Already, several hours before, I had received word that Cossacks had been seen on the Plaine des Vertus.

I had accepted the offer of a lady to spend the night at her château near Versailles. As soon as we had passed the gate of the city, I gave orders for my groom to ride a hundred paces ahead of the carriage, and if he caught sight of any Cossacks to fire a shot in the air as a signal that the carriages were to turn back.

I arrived without any trouble at Glatigny, worn out by so many varied emotions. I was undecided whether to proceed on to Rambouillet and rejoin the Empress Marie Louise or go to my mother at Navarre where she doubtless had arrived.

In such troublous times irresolution is one of our chief ills. Mine sprang especially from my continual fear of encountering my husband and being obliged to go back to him. On the other hand, it is true that these domestic worries were so acute that they distracted my mind from my misfortunes, the loss of my rank and so on, or rather allowed me to face these other problems calmly.

It was late when we arrived at Glatigny. I had my children put to bed immediately and threw myself down on a couch.

Hardly had I secured a little rest when day began to break and I heard the sound of cannon and even musketry from Paris.

"The cannon thunders, claiming its victims." I had never before heard it except in connection with public rejoicing.

The frightful idea that death was overtaking my fellow countrymen so near at hand, instead of hastening my flight, made me desire to linger and at least learn what fate had overtaken this city which had been my cradle, and all of whose inhabitants seemed suddenly dear to me.

I felt, however, that my rank would not allow me to remain in a private house and I went on to the Petit Trianon. I sent for General Preval, who commanded the cavalry depots at Versailles, and informed him of any intention of remaining there while waiting further events. At the same time, I asked him to let me know the moment there was any danger. I was well aware of the fact that it was possible for the Cossacks to arrive at the Trianon by way of the Malmaison and Bougival road, but I trusted him to protect me.

I ordered my servants not to leave the premises and I walked about the gardens hearing the sound of firing, which filled me with anxiety. Soon, however, I was reassured, as the noise stopped. Then I had at least some grounds to believe that fighting was no longer going on.

After a considerable time had elapsed, I caught sight of a soldier of one of the chasseur regiments approaching on foot. He asked to speak to me privately to deliver a message from the General. His calm attitude, the fact that he was on foot and seemed in no way disturbed made me feel that his news could not be in the least alarming.

Nevertheless, the General had sent him to me to say that there was not a moment to be lost, that the depot troops were leaving Versailles, the princes and marshals had already passed through the town, and within a few hours the city would be occupied by the enemy. I sent for my attendants, some of whom in spite of my orders had gone into Versailles.

I attempted to reassure those who had remained with me as well as I could, and at last set out on the road to Rambouillet. I found it congested by carriages, soldiers, wounded, and peasant refugees.

What was to become of me? Which way was I to turn? On the one hand I was liable to fall again into the clutches of my husband, on the other there was my mother, who seemed entirely abandoned by everyone and who might be waiting for my arrival.

Finally, there was the thought that my fate was wound up with that of a family whose head had been a father to me. Could I desert them in their distress? This last argument proved the strongest of all and I determined to rejoin Empress Marie Louise.

I was turning over these thoughts in my mind while my children with the unconcern of their age played about in the carriage and enjoyed themselves beside me as if our flight were nothing more than a game and as if at that moment their entire future were not being destroyed.

I arrived very late at Rambouillet, at the moment when the princes and cabinet ministers, having rested their horses, were setting out for Chartres. They were greatly surprised to see me. My first act was to inquire what had happened in Paris. King Joseph seemed inclined to conceal the fact that the city had capitulated, but King Jerome gave me all the details and even showed me the proclamation, said to have been written by the Prince of Schwarzenberg, which invited the Parisians to follow the example of the inhabitants of the city of Bordeaux, who had demanded the return of the Bourbons.

They advised me not to remain an hour longer at Rambouillet, for the Cossacks would doubtless enter the town that same night. I paid little attention to their advice, considering, perhaps erroneously, that they were unduly alarmed. Moreover, it was out of the question to go on with horses that had just traveled twenty-five miles. I quietly sent my children to bed and was about to seek a little much needed repose myself when an orderly with a letter from my husband was announced.

The latter had passed through Versailles during the night. Furious at not finding me with the Empress when he caught up with her, he commanded me in the harshest language to join him immediately.

He added an official order to this effect signed by the Secretary of State and by the Empress herself. This letter contained such an outrageous sentence that I was infuriated by it. It settled any hesitations I might have had and I no longer wondered whether or not I should go to stay with my mother.

I wrote my husband that I had been on the point of joining the Empress Marie Louise, but that his severity had reminded me too clearly of my former sufferings, and I intended to escape them by taking refuge with my mother.

At the same time, I reassured him as to the health of his children. I also wrote the Empress and the Emperor apologizing for my conduct and giving the true reasons for it.

All these letters I turned over to the officer, who had practically received orders to take me back with him as a prisoner. While I was writing these letters, I was interrupted for a moment by Colonel de Carignan, who with his regiment was supposed to cover the retreat of the rest of the troops and who was much perplexed as to what to do as he could find no one qualified to issue orders.

He was indignant regarding the conduct of the Minister of War who had left without leaving any instructions. I was forced to issue them myself finally. I asked him to keep his regiment in town until I had left and especially to inform me if his scouts caught sight of any Cossacks.

This having been done and my letters written and addressed, I was completely worn out and was about to snatch a few moments' rest when suddenly someone came knocking violently at my door, crying out as he did so, "Make haste, make haste; we must leave at once."

I was sure the Cossacks were close at hand and sprang up, but it turned out to be a false alarm caused by some other travelers who were leaving and who by mistake had knocked at my door.

The Chateau of Rambouillet, filled with all those people whose fears had caused them to leave Paris, had become a public hostelry open to every passer-by.

At dawn the Duchesse de Raguse, and the Duchesse de Reggio, Madame de Sainte-Aulaire and Madame Mollien arrived. They were greatly upset because the capital had capitulated. They told me the Emperor was doubtless proceeding toward Paris and that their husbands were prepared to die fighting beside him. After listening to a hundred futile comments on the situation, I advised them not to remain any longer at Rambouillet, since the town was in danger and I was leaving it immediately myself to go on to Navarre.

My route led through the forests. I sent a game-keeper ahead of me to act as guide. Hardly had I entered the wood when one of my servants dashed up at full speed, completely out of breath, to announce that he had just caught sight of the Cossacks in the near-by plain of La Queue.

I examined a map of the environs of Paris, Which I had had the foresight to secure, as there was no one with me who could advise me, and I saw that taking

into account the distance and time element I was heading directly toward the enemy. I retraced my route and returned to the broad military highway.

I had scarcely proceeded a mile on the road when I saw a Cossack emerge from the woods and gallop off across the plain. My groom dashed after him at full speed, and he disappeared in the woods. I had not a moment to lose in crossing the plain before the arrival of the main body of the Cossacks.

Not being able to stop at Maintenon I asked the colonel of a French regiment that fortunately happened to be there to let me have an escort to accompany me across country as far as Louye, the estate belonging to Monsieur d'Arjuzon, my gentleman in waiting, who with his wife had accompanied me.

It was there I was planning to spend the night. At that moment a messenger passed from whom I learned that he had just left the Emperor at the Cour de France and that the Emperor was going alone with an aide-de-camp to Paris.

This news affected me deeply. I imagined that Paris was about to be entirely destroyed and that the Emperor, after having made desperate efforts to rescue his capital from the hands of the enemy, would perhaps succumb himself along with all those who were by his side.

What a horrible thought that was! "Ah," I exclaimed, "if my advice had only been followed all these disasters might have been avoided."

The shock of all these thoughts threw my mind into utter confusion. Having at last arrived at Louye I dismissed my escort and entirely alone gave way at last to the weaknesses of my sex. As long as I had been obliged to protect the safety of my children, as long as I had been active, courage had not deserted me. But now, reassured as to the fate of those beings who were particularly dear to me, I was conscious of the disaster that had befallen my country and my friends.

Blood and flames seemed to be all about me. The quiet of this countryside contrasted so violently with the carnage which I imagined was taking place only a few miles off that I almost regretted the turmoil from which I had just escaped.

Nevertheless, the night spent at Louye gave me a rest I needed after the fatigues of all kinds that I had lately undergone. The following morning, I arrived at the house of my mother, who after having been so much worried and so anxious about me was overjoyed to see me once more.

She was quite as ignorant as I of what had taken place in Paris. We soon heard the facts from a servant who had managed to escape. He described the entry of the allied armies which he had witnessed and spoke of the return of the Bourbons that was said to be about to take place.

This information seemed to me bearable after all the horrors my imagination had conjured up. "In other words, it is merely a change of dynasty," I said. "Well, as long as France does not suffer, we must not mind if we are sacrificed."

The calamity thus appeared less serious than I had thought it would be, and my nerves became calmer. But when we heard that among the young women who had hastened most eagerly to greet the

foreign invaders there were several who had belonged to the Empress's own household we were deeply grieved that well-born French ladies should behave in a manner which would have made women of the most common class blush.

Our national honor was never dearer to me than in these moments when it was shamed under the very eyes of the enemy." The entourage of the Prince of Benevento [Monsieur de Talleyrand] had been as I learned later the hotbed of this revolution. For a long time, he had been in relations with all the enemies of France through the Princesse de Courlande and the Duc de Dalberg.

He had taken care to have himself arrested at the gate the day he was pretending to follow the Empress and he had spent the night at the house of the Duc de Raguse doubtless encouraging him to commit those acts of treason which took place the following day.

The Duc in making his troops capitulate had dared name as one of his conditions that the life of the Emperor, whose cause his surrender overthrew, should be spared.

Consequently, he was fully conscious of the importance of his acts. How shameful to bargain with the enemy for the life of your commanding officer!

Why was he not at his side, fighting with him? We awaited news of the Emperor with the greatest anxiety. It was at the Cour de France that he heard of the capitulation of Paris.

Alone and without troops, he could not proceed and he returned to Fontainebleau. Monsieur de Maussion, one of the accountants employed by the Duc de Bassano, was the first to give my mother news of what had taken place.

In the middle of the night she entered my room and all in tears threw herself on my bed as she exclaimed: "Poor, poor Napoleon, he is being sent to the island of Elba. How unhappy he will be . . . If it were not for his wife I should go and shut myself up with him."

I saw how deeply she still loved him and thought bitterly how much courage she had needed in order to leave his side.

Monsieur de Maussion gave us additional details regarding the tragic events which had taken place. During his narrative my mother's attention seemed absorbed only by the Emperor's misfortunes. His fate grieved us deeply, but so far as I personally was concerned the news that the Bourbons had been recalled to the throne of France, that peace was about to be signed, that the nation as a whole seemed contented, and that we did not have to bewail the loss of any of those whom we loved—all this appeared a happy solution compared with the disasters I had feared a short time before.

It is easy enough to console oneself for the loss of wealth and of a royal crown. Human mishaps carry with them the power of ennobling the soul of the person on whom they fall. That soul becomes proud and contented beneath their blows, it is no longer wounded by them and it seems as though one's moral stature grew as one's social position decreased.

Always inclined to be hasty in making my decisions I already concluded that I had lost all my possessions in France, that the only fortune I now owned was my diamonds, and that with them I should go off to Martinique and settle down there in a little house which still belonged to my mother.

How glad I was to have instilled in my children from their earliest years those principles which fortify men against the vicissitudes of life! I took advantage of the present circumstances to accustom them not to count on anything except what they could obtain by their own efforts.

I found a kind of pleasure in depicting our lot to them in the darkest colors and ended up by saying with a smile: "My children, you are nobodies now. No longer do you possess kingdoms, or principalities, or dukedoms. Perhaps it is best for you that this should have happened, but in order to make it so you must be obedient and when hard."

Already when the enemy drew near, in order to make them share in the public misfortunes, I had suppressed their dessert at dinner, and they had accepted this little privation very willingly. Now again my son replied, "Mama, if you want me to, be a soldier, and some day perhaps I'll be a colonel."

"Alas," I answered deeply moved, "perhaps you will never be able to fight for France."

"If that is so, mama," he answered immediately, "I shall never fight against France." My only answer was to pick him up and kiss him. His brother inquired if he could no longer have his wooden rocking-horse.

I told him he must give it up, and he never mentioned it again. Mademoiselle Cochelet, to whom I mentioned my idea of taking refuge in Martinique, made me promise to keep her with me no matter what became of me.

She and Monsieur de Maussion went off to Paris to attend to my affairs there.

Although we were always anxious to obtain further details regarding the Emperor, we had only such news as was to be found in the newspapers which a groom who had remained at Malmaison forwarded to us.

These papers were so filled with insulting remarks about the Emperor that the Empress felt indignant as well as wounded by their attitude.

"Let them accuse him of being too fond of glory, of being too ambitious, but at least they should not slander him about other matters regarding which I know more than anyone else," she exclaimed and she went on to explain warmly all the misstatements contained in the papers.

To me the Emperor already seemed too much a historic figure to be affected by remarks printed in some newsheet or other, no matter how eloquent those remarks might be. The only thing that pained me was to see Frenchmen reviling in his misfortune the man whom they had acclaimed when he was successful.

We, like the rest, had for years found fault with him for the incessant wars for which we perhaps wrongly held him responsible.

If we were mistaken in this it was because his power so dazzled us that we were inclined to consider him the source both of conflict and of peace throughout the world. Indeed, our cause itself lost some of its appeal on account of our mistaken idea that by demanding so much from.

Fortune he had wearied her and thus drawn disaster on himself and on all France. News reached us from Paris that the allied sovereigns wished to save my mother, my brother and myself by isolating us from the rest of the Emperor's family. A special guard had been dispatched to protect Malmaison. Mademoiselle Cochelet wrote me that Monsieur de Nesselrode, one of the Russian Emperor's cabinet ministers, had come to see her. She had been asked to transmit to me all sorts of expressions of respect and offers to do anything possible for me. Indeed, the terms in which the allies inquired after our welfare were so excessively cordial, their offer of assistance so pressing, that it seemed as though they were more interested in what became of us than in the fate of the family who were coming back into power on the ruins we left behind.

Monsieur de Nesselrode asked my reader to inquire just what my projects were for the future as his masters had both the power and the wish to carry out any plans I might have. I refused to separate myself from my parents, and I accepted favors only after the treaty of April 11 had settled the fate of the Emperor and the other members of his family.

I know that even Monsieur de Talleyrand when my future was being discussed insisted that my desires should be carried out, saying, "Oh, Queen Hortense! I consider she should receive special treatment." All the various political factions appeared to sympathize with the position in which my mother and I found ourselves.

The Empress and I both received letters from Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg

This is a copy of mine:

Madam, I am pleased to be able again to communicate with your Majesty and at the same time convey news that may not prove altogether disagreeable. Since my arrival here I have been worried about your Majesty's fate in view of the painful situation in which she finds herself.

Monsieur de Humboldt was the first who succeeded in furnishing me with exact details as to where she was staying and thus reassured me. From that moment on I may say that the thought of how I might make myself useful to her absorbed me, for, up to now, I have never been able to show my devotion except in words.

The arrival of the kind Mademoiselle Cochelet indicated to me what steps might prove the most agreeable to your Majesty and her August Mother. I resolved to speak

frankly to my imperial master and I hasten to repeat to your Majesty the result of the conversation, which took place yesterday.

I trust that she will forgive me if I acted on her behalf without having received any instructions to do so. The kindest of Emperors, if I may call him so, said that for a long time he had desired to make the acquaintance of those princesses whose worth was only equaled by their charm, and that he was deeply interested in the fate of that estimable family which had behaved so nobly in such trying circumstances.

He praised the conduct of the Viceroy highly, who alone had behaved in a dignified and noble manner. It would take too long to repeat in full all the favorable and true remarks the Emperor made regarding your Majesties.

He finally asked me to convey to your Majesty as well as to her August Mother his desire to make their acquaintance. He would have gone to Navarre to call on them had this spot not been so remote, but he suggested they meet him at Malmaison as being nearer Paris and more agreeable.

He hoped to see your Majesty there and also her children. At the same time, he conveyed to me the most reassuring news regarding the business affairs of your Majesty's family. Mademoiselle Cochelet has undertaken to convey this letter to her as well as one in which I inform her Majesty the Empress what I have been able to do on her behalf. May I request your Majesty to be kind enough to inform me when she expects to arrive at Malmaison, and when her August Mother will also be there, in order that I may announce the fact to the Emperor in advance.

May I also request her to treat me as her man of affairs, who will attend to anything she may consider necessary. At the same time, I assure her that my greatest reward will be the knowledge that what I have done on her behalf meets with her approval. Until the moment comes when I can in person present my respects and beseech her to accept the expression of my complete devotion and profound respect, I have the honor to remain, madam, your Majesty's most humble and most obedient Servant,

Leopold, Prince of SAXE-COBURG, General in the service of Russia.

Paris, April 14, 1814

The letter addressed to the Empress was very similar. I told my mother that I considered she was quite free to accept the invitation of the Emperor of Russia.

The divorce had completely separated her from the Bonaparte family, and she must have someone to rely on. But as for me, my duty lay elsewhere and nothing could prevent my accomplishing it. I refused to yield to my mother's urgent request that I accompany her. I finally made her understand

that I must be where there was the greatest need for my presence and as I felt sure the Empress Marie Louise must be overcome with grief, I could not hesitate a moment longer than was necessary in going to her to console her to the best of my ability.

My mother therefore set out for Malmaison and I for Rambouillet along the same route over which I had passed a few days before in such an agitated state of mind. Now I was calmer. I was no longer uncertain how to act. Our disaster was definitely accomplished. At the moment I was leaving Louye, the estate belonging to Monsieur d'Arjuzon where I had again spent the night, my groom arrived from Paris bearing another letter from King Leopold of which the postscript was as follows:

Madam, I have just been told by Mademoiselle Cochelet that your Majesty was no longer with the Empress, her mother, and that her August Mother would arrive alone in Malmaison. May I implore her, since I have received special instructions from Emperor Alexander to invite her to this conference at Malmaison, and know he is particularly anxious to have your Majesty present at it, not to delay her arrival there. I consider that this interview is of the greatest importance in deciding the future of your Majesty and of her children and I am extremely anxious that both the Empress and your Majesty attend this conference. Your Majesty will please forgive me if I seem to offer my advice. I trust she is sufficiently familiar with my attachment to her cause to realize that my action is prompted entirely by devotion and I hope she will prove this by graciously making her appearance at Malmaison.

Mademoiselle Cochelet added a number of arguments regarding my children. She based them on Monsieur de Nesselrode's opinion that I ought not to return to the Empress Marie Louise. They both agreed that it was most inadvisable for me to seem to identify my cause with that of a family whom France did not wish to hear spoken of again.

To do so would prevent my making myself useful to my country in the future, and so on and so forth. Although generally docile and easy to guide where the little things of daily life are involved, nothing can prevent me from executing what I have decided should be done.

The more harm it seems likely to do me the more I insist on accomplishing it. Neither letters nor arguments had any effect whatever on me, and I set out for Rambouillet as I had decided to do. On my way I met French cavalry retreating into Normandy.

The dejected and dismayed appearance of these soldiers whose cause their commander the Duc de Raguse had betrayed at the moment when they believed they were going into action made me sigh profoundly. Soon I caught sight of the enemy's outposts. It was the first foreign uniform I had seen. I felt a pang of grief, which grew more keen as on arriving at the château I found Russian guardsmen waiting on the Empress Marie Louise.

I arrived deeply touched and prepared to offer her all the consolation that was in my power. I did not know whether I should find the Emperor's brothers with the Empress, but I heard that they had left for Switzerland and only the Empress and the King of Rome remained at Rambouillet.

My visit was announced. What a surprise awaited me! The Empress sent back word that she was not well, that she was writing the Emperor and would send me word when she could see me. It seemed to me that in the midst of our common misfortunes, at a time when her heart should be still more deeply wounded than mine, a sign of sympathy should comfort her and not disturb her.

I went to see the King of Rome. Poor little fellow! He was playing about in his sitting-room, quietly, ignorant of what the future held in store. I embraced him effusively and tenderly, after which I retired to my apartment, where a little later I received word that the Empress wished to see me. I found her in bed, sad and depressed. She asked for news of the Emperor, complained bitterly about the conduct of his brothers and their persistency in insisting that she go farther away.

This was, however, in accordance with distinct orders given by the Emperor Napoleon. The Emperor was most anxious not to have the Empress and the King of Rome fall into the hands of strangers. He had declared, "I should rather have seen my son in the Seine than in the hands of France's enemies."

It was fear of this eventuality which had caused that unwise departure from Paris. It was natural, therefore, that the Emperor's brothers should have attempted to carry off the Empress and her son to some place of safety, especially as they had not dared infringe this order even when, by doing so, they would have increased the energy of the capital to defend itself. Thus, these instructions must have seemed highly imperative. Yet, is it possible to conceive that mental turmoil which overcame everyone in these hours of trial?

Everyone considered that the Emperor's brothers had treated the Empress cruelly. She asked me what my plans were. I replied that my only idea had been to come to her and offer her my consolation. This seemed to embarrass her and she remarked: "I am expecting my father tomorrow morning. I shall be very glad to see him all alone. Moreover, he does not know you, and I fear he would be constrained before you."

I assured her that the only reason for my presence at Rambouillet was the hope that I might be useful to her in some way, that I had acted entirely on impulse, but not being able to do anything I should leave the following morning to go back to my mother, who was most anxious to have me with her.

This explanation seemed to satisfy her. "You are more fortunate than I am," she said. "No one has abandoned you and I have hardly a handful of people to wait on me." What was most on her mind, however, was her meeting with her father the next day. I could not understand why this should upset her so, and I was trying to reassure her when she suddenly said to me, "Ah, sister, do you think it possible that my father will insist that I go to the island of Elba?"

I confess I was so astonished I did not know what reply to make. Was such a thing possible? Here was the woman who swore she could not be away from the Emperor twenty-four hours at a time and whose pretense of affection had baffled entirely my theories by its intensity. I at first could not

believe that a woman brought up in the atmosphere she had lived in could conceive a violent affection for the Emperor, although I thought it quite natural she should admire him.

Her conduct during the years of the Empire had persuaded me that I had been mistaken. I had finally become convinced that no political scheming lay at the bottom of her demonstrations of affection.

At what a moment did I discover the truth! So it was only the crown she regretted. This grief was too entirely due to wounded self-esteem to appear important to me. I felt that my mother needed my presence more. There was a heart which had been broken by the sufferings of a man she had always loved. She alone really required my care. My only thought was how I might get to her the quickest. The following morning, I made my farewells to the Empress. I was much less wrought up than I had been when I arrived. On the highway a few miles from Rambouillet I met the Emperor of Austria and Monsieur de Metternich driving alone in a little open calash.

CHAPTER XII

THE FIRST RESTORATION: THE DEATH OF JOSEPHINE (APRIL 16-MAY 31, 1814)

The Return to Malmaison--A Visit from Emperor Alexander--The Treaty of April 11, 1814--Napoleon at Elba--Josephine and Madame de Remusat--Eugene in Paris--Business Affairs--An Excursion to Marly--The Etiquette at Saint-Leu--A Newspaper Article--Josephine's Last Illness and Death--The Farewell of the Emperor of Russia--The Inheritance of the Empress.

AT one o'clock in the afternoon [April 16, 1814] I arrived at Malmaison. I was astonished to find the courtyard crowded with Cossacks and I inquired the reason for their presence. I was told it was because the Emperor of Russia was walking about the garden with my mother.

I went to look for them and met them near the hothouse. My mother was delighted and surprised by my arrival. She kissed me tenderly and said to her companion: "This is my daughter and these are my grand-children. You must take good care of them." She released the arm of the Emperor, who immediately offered it to me.

Thus, we found ourselves, the Emperor Alexander and I, side by side, without having looked at one another or exchanged a word. We were some little distance from the rest of the company and rather embarrassed in beginning our conversation.

My position was a difficult one. Although I had for a long while been hearing favorable comments on my present companion even from Emperor Napoleon himself, and though I had formerly been most anxious to make his acquaintance, this was hardly the moment to say so. A distinctly reserved attitude was what I felt I must adopt toward the man who had invaded and conquered my country. Had he not begun to talk about the visit I had just made the Empress Marie Louise, I believe I should not have managed to say a word.

Fortunately, this awkward situation did not last long. We arrived at the chateau where my mother and children joined us. With her usual grace my mother found subjects to talk about. The Emperor, in phrases which seemed sincere, deplored the ravages of war and assured us that far from seeking to satisfy any personal ambition his sole purpose was to put an end to the slaughter.

These sentiments at least consoled me more or less for the sad position in which France was placed. I was grateful to him for expressing them, but I remained silent.

He petted my children a great deal and asked me "What is there I can do for them? Please let me look after their interests." I replied that although I appreciated his offer there was nothing I needed for my children.

He left, and my mother reproved me for the distant manner with which I had treated him. I pointed out to her how misplaced any display of warmth would have been toward a man who had just declared himself the open enemy of the Emperor, whose action had just destroyed my children's future and the position of the family whose name I bore.

I did not dare ask the French nation to share my regrets for the past. People seemed overjoyed at the downfall of the Empire. Every day brought letters and resolutions from all parts of the kingdom approving what had taken place in Paris, and thousands of voices saluted the Restoration as ushering in a new era of freedom.

The less the changes of fortune affected me personally, the less I considered myself justified in betraying my absence of concern at what had taken place. The public would not have understood my point of view. In its hastily formulated judgments, it would have considered me hypocritical, as I should presumably have been afflicted by this change in my social position, and my misfortunes would indeed have justified my being sad. It would have required only a slight effort on my part to adopt the proper attitude and it was my duty not to lower myself in the eyes of the public.

I also felt uncomfortable to hear the Emperor so frequently accused of being responsible for having postponed a peace that everyone desired so eagerly. The foreigners were all the time talking about establishing that era of good will which was so necessary for the human race, and lavishing on France all sorts of magnificent promises of riches and happiness of all kinds.

I was jealous at seeing them act in this manner. I did not at the time realize that all their promises were merely snares and delusions, and that the unhappy masses were soon to find themselves worse off than they had been before. I shall not go into the details of the Emperor's abdication.

I shall not examine the motives of those who advised it. I prefer to speak only of those who behaved well up to the very end. Among them Marshal Macdonald and the Due de Vicence deserve especial mention. The Duke deserves credit for the way in which he defended the interests of the Emperor and his family. He wrote me a letter about what he had done on my behalf in the treaty of Fontainebleau, where it was decided that I could continue to be separated from my husband and where the guardianship of my children was assured me, a clause for which he had secured the approval of Emperor Napoleon. This is what he wrote:

Madam, Your Majesty retains her children; she may continue to live among her friends. Everything she cares about has received as favorable treatment as circumstances will permit. I am pleased at having been able to secure conditions which will be agreeable to her and of which I wish to be the first to advise her. Your Majesty is aware how devoted our family is to her. I hope she will count on this devotion and that in the midst of the misfortunes which surround her she will continue to rely on our respect and loyalty.

I remain, etc. CAULAINCOURT, DUC DE VICENCE. Paris, April 11, 1814

He sent me at the same time the clause in the treaty which referred to me and which read as follows:

ARTICLE VI. In the countries whose sovereignty the Emperor relinquishes for him and his family, certain estates, or sums taken from the Treasury, furnishing an annual income, free of all charges, amounting to two million five hundred thousand francs, shall be set aside. These estates or funds to belong to and be the property of the princes and princesses of that family to do with as they see fit. They shall be divided among them in such a manner that the income shall be apportioned as follows:

To Madame Mere [Napoleon's Mother]	300,000 francs
To King Joseph	300,000 "
To King Louis	200,000 "
To Queen Hortense and her Children	400,000 "
To King Jerome and the Queen	500,000"
To Princess Elisa	300,000 "
To Princess Pauline	300,000 "

There shall be set aside for Prince Eugene, Viceroy of Italy, a suitable domain outside of France.

The Empress Josephine was to keep an income of a million francs, which reverted to the State after her death. All these agreements made it appear as though I were about to enjoy an ease and independence such as I had never known before.

My mother hoped I would remain with her. This was the only point that had not yet been settled. As she had for the last few years been living in seclusion and not appearing at court, there could be no harm in her staying on in France. This was more difficult for me. The idea of exile had been one which at first, I was ready to accept but which, when I reconsidered it, seemed like too much of a sacrifice. I did not dare to speak of it to her nor think of it myself.

As the Emperor of Russia had paid us a visit at Malmaison everyone felt the need of following his example. The Prince of Neuchatel was among those who called.

He appeared embarrassed and sought to find excuses for his conduct, speaking of the Emperor's ambitions, the happiness of France, and a thousand other phrases which always occur to those who desert us in hope of making their fortune elsewhere.

He was an industrious soul, hard-working, skillful in the performance of his duties as a staff officer, but possessing neither a remarkable mind nor much cleverness.

The Emperor had found him, taken him, used him, and from force of habit come to consider him as a friend. I also saw Bernadotte, the Swedish Crown Prince. He had formerly been a republican, was honest, possessed a gracious and polite manner and remarkable military talents.

He wished to explain his conduct, and it is always awkward when your conduct requires explanation. He assured me the Emperor's unfair attitude toward him and toward Sweden was the only reason for his taking up arms against his former master, and that these arms had been unused since he set foot on his native soil.

The King of Prussia and the Princes of the Confederated German States also hastened to call on my mother. I have already said that until then I had remained entirely ignorant of political matters in general. The result attained, peace or war, being the only thing, which gave me cause for joy or grief. This was in fact true of all women during the Empire.

Everyone would have thought it ridiculous for a woman to have anything to do with political matters. The Emperor had set the fashion in this respect. In view of the prominent position I occupied, this ignorance became dangerous for me at the time to which I now refer. I found myself suddenly in a position such as I never imagined I should be called to occupy ; the whole question of our national interests and rights, the sentiments people might try to make me and my family express, the role they sought to make us play were all equally unfamiliar to me.

One day the Empress brought in to me Marshal de Wrede, whom the King of Bavaria had sent to see her in regard to her son's position. "Now," she said, "I shall leave you with my daughter. She knows better than I do what would be best for her brother." A few months before the Allies entered Paris, the King of Bavaria had written my mother, seeking to win Eugene away from the imperial cause.

The Allies offered him the Italian crown if he would consent to go over to them. My brother very rightly refused. On remembering this incident, it seemed to me that if the person who came to see us was sent by Eugene's father-in-law it must be because some new decision favorable to him had been arrived at. Marshal de Wrede told me that the King of Bavaria had instructed him to find out from us what territory the Viceroy would prefer to rule over.

My brother at the time was at Mantua with his French and Italian troops. Although I had not the faintest knowledge regarding international affairs this inquiry, coming as it did after a treaty stipulating that the Viceroy was to continue to enjoy sovereign rights, might mean that certain powers wished him to remain in Italy.

As far as he was concerned, I was sure that having devoted the best years of his life to organizing the prosperity of that country he would prefer to spend the rest of his days there, and I mentioned to the Marshal the Duchy of Milan as suitable for him.

He replied that he was about to send the Viceroy a messenger and advised me to write him to proceed immediately to Paris, as this would be greatly to his advantage, both in his own opinion and in that of the Prince of Metternich.

In spite of my inexperience in politics I grasped the fact that Austria, which was more anxious than any other nation to assure her rights in Italy, would be the last country to surrender the smallest portion of that territory to anyone else.

Consequently, if the Austrian minister advised my brother to leave his army and come to Paris, the most advisable policy for Eugene to pursue was the opposite.

Always impulsive and eager to communicate to those I love ideas which may benefit them, I wrote to my brother that he had best keep up his army in order that he might negotiate to better advantage, since I had learned by what had happened in France that the man who places himself at the mercy of his enemies always has cause to regret that action.

Had it not been decided that all hostilities should cease at once? Had not the Emperor Napoleon given himself up? And what fate would have befallen the Emperor, would even his life have been spared, without the intervention of the Emperor of Russia? My letter, full of remarks of this character, ended as follows: "You have obeyed your generous impulses long enough. It is time you thought of your own interests. Do what you should, what you can, what you dare."

I handed this letter to Monsieur de Wrede. In those days I was very young. It never occurred to me that anyone would open a letter. I do not know how far honesty goes in diplomatic circles and whether Monsieur de Wrede had been told to trick me. All that I do know is that Monsieur de Metternich, who owed me a little gratitude and who on his arrival in Paris had talked about coming to see me, never appeared.

Nor did any other Austrian ever ask admittance to Malmaison. Probably people considered that my advice to my brother was rather too outspoken. But the future proved that it was not worthless.

Perhaps it was after this incident that people did me the honor to refer to my political influence and considered wrongly, I took an active interest in such matters. What they did not know was that in spite of the energetic advice I gave my brother I was more delighted with the unselfish way in which he behaved than if he had followed it, regardless of all the material benefits he would have obtained.

"The Emperor," my brother said to me afterwards as we were talking over the matter, "when he renounced the Italian crown stipulated that I was to have a principality. I did not doubt that the Allies would act in good faith, and although I could have continued to hold out for a long time in Mantua I would have reproached myself if I had exposed the life of a single man to serve my private interests. Too much blood had already been spilled, and the fatal incident at Milan proved to me that the Italians were not ready to fight for their independence.

Consequently, all my efforts would have been solely for my personal ends." It was a curious fact that in acting as he did on this occasion, Eugene followed the example of his father, who when commander-in-chief of the army of the Rhine pursued an equally generous but more disastrous course.

The Convention passed a decree excluding nobles from holding positions in the army. All the people who were with my father at the time advised him to engage in a battle which if successful would nullify the decree as far as he was concerned. He preferred to withdraw to his estate, for, as he put it, he

did not wish to break any law no matter how unjust it might be and especially to spill any blood in his own behalf.

Certainly, both he and my brother enjoyed a feeling of satisfaction such as the ambitious man can never know. The Emperor Napoleon was about to leave for the island of Elba. I had written him. He had replied and seemed touched that I had been to see the Empress Marie Louise.

He had not for a moment lost his self-possession and he considered in a perfectly calm manner whether or not he should live on. I have been told, but I have never had any proof of the statement, that he made an attempt to end his days, but that finally he said, "One commits suicide to escape disgrace; one does not commit suicide to escape misfortune."

He smiled sometimes at the insults which were cast at him from every direction. In saying good-by to those who had remained by his side up to the last moment he ordered them to be faithful to the interests of France and not to forget him. But the most touching moment of all, when every eye filled with tears, was when he sent for his eagles, pressed them to his heart, and bade farewell to his battle-flags, grown tattered on the fields of glory.

His last thoughts were all for France's prosperity. Monsieur de Flahaut told me all the details of what happened at Fontainebleau and we both grieved over the misfortune of this great and noble man. The Duc de Vicence, having fulfilled his difficult task, called at Malmaison. As French Ambassador to Russia he had occasion to appreciate the character of Emperor Alexander and to become very fond of him.

The Duke reproached me for the coldness with which I had received the Emperor, who seemed to have been hurt by it. "Don't you know," the Duke said to me, "that he was the only one to defend the interests of the imperial family? If he had not been there, what might not have happened even to the life of Emperor Napoleon? You do not realize the hatred of the other monarchs, how they tried to humiliate him. Do you not know that if Emperor Napoleon has a refuge on the island of Elba it is thanks to the Russian Emperor?"

A few days later the Emperor Alexander came to Malmaison. He spent much of his time with me, playing with my children and taking them on his knees. I felt a moment's emotion when I thought, "It is an enemy on whom they are dependent nowadays."

The Emperor of Russia called again several times and seemed to enjoy being with us. I had opportunities to appreciate his tactful regard for others and the sensitiveness of his nature. His chief charm was his hunger for affection. He makes you trust him because he shows that he trusts you. He is so courtly in the way he seeks to make himself agreeable to you that you feel he wishes to be pardoned for making himself indispensable. I admit I regretted feeling this way about him. His character attracted me. I felt that I liked him, and it is annoying to have to accept constantly services from someone you like.

Consequently, I abandoned my former constraint and behaved more naturally, but as soon as he took up the question of my business matters my attitude changed. He also seemed embarrassed and the conversation went no further. One day he said to my mother that if he sought only to satisfy her personal tastes, he would place a palace in Russia at our disposal.

He added, however, that she would never find a spot like her beautiful Malmaison, nor could my delicate health support the rigors of that climate. Finally, he sent for my reader one morning and told her that as we ourselves would not express our wishes it was for our friends to decide what should be done, and that, as far as he was concerned, nothing gave him so much pleasure as to make himself useful to us.

The Duc de Vicence was again instructed to confer with Monsieur de Nesselrode as to what had best be done. The Comte d'Artois was already in Paris, and everyone thronged around him.

Madame de Remusat, who so shortly before had been lady in waiting to the Empress Josephine, came to Malmaison one morning and gave her to understand that it was advisable for her (my mother) to pay some mark of respect to the family who were about to ascend the French throne. The Empress, so Madame de Remusat said, doubtless wished to remain in France. But this would scarcely be allowed unless she had given evidence of her adherence to the cause of the Bourbons.

She then showed my mother the draft of a letter which she and Monsieur de Talleyrand had drawn up and which she advised my mother to copy and send to the Comte d'Artois. She doubtless thought her scheme would prove successful, for rumors of what she was trying to do, so contrary to my mother's dignity, had been widely circulated beforehand. The letter itself was ridiculous. It concealed disloyalty to the Emperor Napoleon under cover of seeking personal advantages. I pointed this out to my mother when we were alone together. She showed it to the Emperor of Russia, who thought it in very bad taste and was most indignant about the matter.

The Empress's reply to Madame de Remusat was dignified and rather disdainful. Madame de Remusat came to see me, as she was convinced that I had placed obstacles in the way of the success of her negotiations. She talked about the legitimacy of the dynasty and pointed out how impossible it was for the Bourbons to recognize anything that had taken place since their departure from France and so on.

To this I replied: "The Bourbons are free to recognize whom and what they please. They are not free to pretend that what took place never happened. If our lofty titles annoy them, we are willing to accept lower ones and live quietly. But we owe it to the people who made us what we are, to those who sought to serve us loyally, never to allow ourselves to act in a manner not worthy of that rank. We must behave in a proper manner; it is our duty to do so. As for other people, I admit that though a man may overthrow the god he has himself created, I assure you he acts shamefully when he rejects him."

She left greatly annoyed with me, and a hundred anecdotes about how attached we were to our titles, our regrets at the loss of our rank and the danger there was in our ambition to recover all this began to circulate in the drawing-rooms of Paris.

At the time when I had had the misfortune to lose Madame de Broc at Aix, Monsieur Sosthenes de la Rochefoucauld was there with his wife. He had sympathized with my grief and asked to be presented to me. He had married a Mademoiselle de Montmorency, who was very beautiful. Both had been brought up to hate our dynasty. He, however, did not include me in this enmity, and I won his confidence to such an extent that he admitted his attachment to the Bourbons and the resentment the exile of Madame de Chevreuse had caused him.

He continued to come and see me in Paris, but made no effort to secure any position at a court which doubtless would have been only too glad to welcome him.

Madame Du Cayla, who like myself had been brought up at Saint-Germain and who had always been very friendly with me, shared the political views of Monsieur de la Rochefoucauld. Notwithstanding what had lately taken place they both continued to come and see me and did not seek to conceal their joy at the approaching return of the Bourbons. I considered this feeling a perfectly natural one. Indeed, I myself rather sympathized with this family, whose misfortunes had made such an impression on me when Madame Campan used to tell me about them. But like the majority of the French I was not aware of how many people were included in the family.

The only one ever mentioned was the Duchesse d'Angoulême. People in Paris spoke of her as a sort of angelic creature whose return would bring peace and happiness to all. Everyone was touched by the thought of the suffering she had been through and memories of her mother [Marie Antoinette] still further increased the affection people already had for her.

The King had just arrived at Compiegne. All those who hoped to belong to the new court hastened there. I selected this moment to make a trip to Paris to attend to some business matters and allow all those who still were with me an opportunity to seek to obtain new posts for themselves elsewhere.

The Emperor of Russia learned that I was in Paris and asked Monsieur Tchernycheff to inquire if I would receive him. When he called, he said: am just back from Compiegne. What I see there discourages me. I love France. I wish her to be prosperous and I fear this Bourbon family will not know how to insure her happiness.

The King showed me his proclamation. It was dated the nineteenth year of his reign. I advised him to remove this date, but he did not seem inclined to do so. I foresee that he will alienate many of his supporters, and his is not the kind of regime France needs. I am sorry because I feel I am to blame. But I did propose to Monsieur de Talleyrand to call the deputies together to draw up a constitution and fix definite terms on which the Bourbons should be allowed to enter Paris. But in the first moments of enthusiasm it did not seem as though the Comte d'Artois could get here quickly enough to satisfy the people.

At any rate it is not my fault if they have made a mistake." I listened to him without seeking to discuss a subject regarding which I might have said too much. I merely asked him about the Duchesse d'Angoulême.

"She may have qualities," he answered, "but if you saw her you would change your opinion of her. Even her voice is harsh and she has nothing of a woman's gentleness about her."

He afterwards spoke about the Emperor Napoleon, told me how he had loved him, and how deeply he had been hurt to discover that he had formed a mistaken estimate of his character. He also said how doubly indignant he had been with the Emperor Napoleon for having provoked this war, since it estranged him from the man he had made a friend of at Tilsit and at Erfurt. Finally, he concluded that although admitting the Emperor's genius he had sworn never to accept a reconciliation with him. Everything he said was uttered in such a frank and sincere way that I could not help forming a favorable opinion of his character. Moreover, he was the only man, Frenchman or foreigner, who spoke in a proper manner about the Emperor Napoleon.

I believe I should have been indignant with anyone who might have pointed out to me that this man was an enemy of the family to which I belonged. About this time my brother came to Paris, having surrendered on honorable terms to the Austrians.

He was full of confidence in the future on account of the stipulations concerning him contained in the treaty of April 11. He had taken his family to Munich to stay with the King of Bavaria, his father-in-law. The purpose of his visit to Paris was to thank the allied sovereigns and learn exactly what his fate was to be.

He was well received everywhere, especially by the Emperor Alexander, who was anxious to make his acquaintance. The only time he called at the court of the Bourbons the King, Louis XVIII, spoke of the good my mother had done for France; the Duc d'Orleans mentioned his former friendship with my father. The Duc d'Angoulême paid little attention to my brother, and the Duc de Berry informed him that the French troops were very fine-looking and asked if he had ever seen any of them. But on the whole Eugene could not complain of the way he was received.

My brother had not been in Paris long before he became conscious that the execution of the treaty as far as he was concerned was most difficult. No one knew where he was to go; everyone held views about what ought to be given him. My mother's sole wish was that her son should receive a position worthy of him, but the only person who supported her claims was the Emperor of Russia. As regards the latter we found ourselves in a most extraordinary position. The friendship he displayed toward us and that which we felt for him precluded any idea of either of us acting from selfish motives.

Nevertheless, he seemed embarrassed to find himself acting as our protector when it was he who had brought about the entire change in our fortunes. He did not know how to make himself useful to us without risking hurting our pride. We who appreciated all his tact could not remember the harm he had done us, because of all the kindness he displayed in order to make us forget it.

Still for more than one reason it was embarrassing to be dependent on him. He had entirely won our friendship. Though it is said to be pleasant to be under obligations to those whom you care for, that is not always true. It is enough to be able to admire those to whom one owes gratitude, but in the case of true friendship one is alarmed by anything that might tarnish the purity of that emotion.

An obligation when contracted obliges one to feel grateful. Where real friendship is concerned one wishes every feeling to be wholly spontaneous and dreads any sense of obligation. Every time the Emperor of Russia came to see me at Paris or at Malmaison it was difficult to avoid bringing up the subject of our affairs. One day I told him about having advised my brother not to leave Italy. I added that although altogether unfamiliar with politics I felt one should always avoid putting oneself in a position of asking a favor, but rather make the other party say, "Let me give way in order to have it over with."

The Emperor laughed at my methods, but doubtless he found that they were fair enough. So great was his desire to make himself useful to us that he even called one evening on Mademoiselle Cochelet to find out from her details regarding my tastes and habits and what I might particularly desire. This action revealed how much he wished to look after our interests and touched me greatly. But what was there I could ask him either for myself or for my children? Fate had just deprived them of everything. I did not then know how difficult it would be to secure any recognition for them in the way of titles or rank.

Monsieur de Nesselrode had already declared it was impossible to give them sovereign powers anywhere, that in view of the name they bore none of the powers and especially not England would consent to abrogate the agreement among themselves that no members of the Bonaparte family were to be allowed to rule.

The only thing that remained to settle was the question of their income, and for that the treaty of April 11 had made ample provision.

The Duc de Vicence recognized already how difficult it would be for him to see that the articles of this treaty were properly observed. He was pleased that in my case a separate agreement prevented the new sovereign from interfering with me.

He therefore decided with the Emperor of Russia and Monsieur de Nesselrode that a duchy should be created for me out of the income of four hundred thousand francs, the sum fixed by the treaty of April 11, and coming from the forests that I owned near Saint-Leu, which a decree of the Emperor Napoleon had turned over to me several years before.

Thus, my children would have a fortune more firmly assured them than that which was mentioned in the treaty of April 11. This duchy which the Allies asked should be given me gave me a title better suited to my present rank and at the same time did not deprive me of that which the treaty itself declared was non-revocable.

I should be able to stay near my mother, near my friends, in my native land. How many reasons there were for accepting what was offered. me. I gave my consent without asking my husband's

approval, believing that he would be satisfied to have his children receive such a compensation, after all they had lost.

He could do nothing for them himself. Should he not rejoice that chance had placed me in a position to assure them a home in their own country and to provide against their wandering about, obliged perhaps to make their way in life, far from the land where they were born? It was true I did not yet know how fierce political passions could be. I could never have imagined anyone could hate little children of their age.

Otherwise I should not have decided to leave in the midst of so many enemies those who were dearer to me than anything on earth. The estate of Saint-Leu belonged jointly to me and my husband.

When the latter left Holland, the Emperor had intended to make it over entirely to me. I refused, not wishing to take advantage of the King's absence to despoil him of his property. Nevertheless, as I did not own any other ground elsewhere and as my husband had written me from Gratz that Saint-Leu belonged to me, it was decided that it was there the duchy should be created.

The Prince of Conde had taken over again the possession of the forest which I owned but which formerly had belonged to him, but I still retained those of Ermenonville and of L'Ile-Adam, which were to belong to the duchy. The rest of the four hundred thousand francs was to consist, as agreed, in government securities.

While these various negotiations were going on, the Emperor of Russia naturally heard Saint-Leu frequently mentioned and wished to see what it looked like. He fixed a date on which to get up a family party to spend the day there. The party consisted of himself, my mother, my brother and me.

The only other person was Marechale Ney, whom the Emperor frequently called on and of whom, like her husband, he was very fond. The Emperor drove up in a little calash, accompanied by Monsieur Tchernycheff.

During lunch he remarked to me "Do you know that there is a solemn service being celebrated in Paris today in honor of King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette? All the foreign monarchs are supposed to attend, and as we drove out here, I pointed to Tchernycheff the curious position in which I find myself. I arrived at Paris filled with animosity against your family, and it is only in their company that I enjoy spending my time. I have inflicted injuries on you; I have benefited others; but it is only from you I secure sincere affection.

Today I should be at Paris with the other kings and here I am at Saint-Leu." We kept on chatting about the strangeness of human life and after lunch we all took a walk in the forest. We passed certain spots where I had had improvements made and which I pointed out with considerable pride. "None of this still belongs to you," remarked the Emperor sadly.

He seemed so sorry to think that it was he who was responsible for the grief I probably felt that I answered gaily, "At least I am still able to enjoy it." We remained till quite late in the park. My mother

retired to the château, and while my young ladies played different games in the shadows of the tall trees, I walked about alone with the Emperor.

He informed me how high an opinion of me he had conceived on account of my courage in enduring so many losses without seeming to be afflicted by them. I replied that I deserved less credit for not having been saddened by such a great loss than another person might have, since I had never really enjoyed my brilliant state and could not regret deeply a thing about which I had never particularly cared.

I added that although I was indifferent about many things there were others which touched me deeply. Thereupon I proceeded to describe some of the saddest experiences I had gone through, the bitterness of which had destroyed my peace of mind. I was constantly expecting a new misfortune to befall me, and when it was not one which touched my heart, I felt greatly relieved. This condition had existed since the death of my son. My health had been profoundly affected and the recent loss of Madame de Broc, that friend of my childhood, had renewed all my despair and my fear of the future.

The Emperor seemed to listen most attentively to even the slightest detail of my narrative and to be as much moved by my eulogy of my friend as though he had known her. Frequently he would interrupt me with the remark: "But you still have friends. I have not met anyone anywhere who has not spoken well of you. You are unjust toward Providence and you do not trust enough in the loving-kindness of God."

He in turn related some of the sorrows that had saddened his life. He assured me he had always found prayer a great consolation, and he placed his hopes in God. He told me this incident: "When we were at the gates of Paris all the generals believed we ought not to attempt to take the city. We hardly had ammunition enough left for one day, as the Emperor Napoleon had outflanked us and cut us off from all our supplies. If Paris had resisted twenty-four hours, we might all have been lost. Alone, holding out against all the others, I persisted in favor of an attack. In this moment of cruel perplexity, I withdrew to my own apartment. I realized the heavy responsibility which rested on my shoulders. I prayed God earnestly.

"Then, full of confidence, I no longer doubted we should be successful."

Imagine what my feelings were on hearing this. I learned that the fate of France, the overthrow of the Emperor, had only been a question of luck, and that the Emperor and his country had been on the point of emerging from the struggle victorious and greater than ever. But the opportunity had passed, and we must resign ourselves. I sought to suppress my emotions and continued our conversation.

I admitted to my companion that my misfortunes had disturbed my religious beliefs. To be sure I could not doubt the goodness of God, but when still very young I had formed the idea that He only sent misfortunes to those He desired to punish. I had received such cruel blows that I could not believe I had deserved them. From then on, my ideas became unorthodox. I enjoyed doing good because it made me happy.

All people who were unfortunate aroused my sympathy because I knew what it was to suffer, but deprived of any purpose in life or any spiritual guidance I looked only to the hereafter to give me any consolation, any escape from my troubles.

The Emperor disagreed with many of my ideas, which he considered pessimistic. He repeated to me several times: "Trust in God. He does not abandon those who love Him. . . . I have had cruel experiences in my own life," he added, "but my conscience, which justified me in the sight of God, fortified me always. I brought Him my troubles and He comforted me. He could justly reproach me for a certain fault which I feel I have not the power to resist. Yet I still place my trust in Him."

The Emperor went on to give me some details about his domestic life, in the happiness he found in a love-affair, illegitimate it is true, but which in the eighteen years it had lasted he had come to consider a sacred bond. He spoke of his children, described the woman he loved, and when his wife was mentioned he said, "Although any reconciliation is impossible between us, she has no better friend than I in the world."

The games the young ladies were playing had stopped. People were waiting for us. We went back into the house. In spite of the kindness the Emperor did not cease to display towards us, my mother, who was constantly sad and depressed, could not overcome her anxiety regarding my brother's future.

I promised her that I would overcome my embarrassment and speak to the Emperor Alexander about this, but after dinner she herself had a talk with him which seemed to relieve her mind. When he was on the point of retiring for the night the Emperor assured me that nowhere had he felt as much at home as in my house.

Elsewhere, wherever he went he encountered a formal atmosphere which he found oppressive. Instead of this, when he was with us he felt as though he were at home. I explained that the flattering opinion he had formed was due to the informal atmosphere I had created in my drawing-room and the pains everyone took not to seem unduly conscious of his presence.

The Emperor of Russia left at nine o'clock in the evening, and my mother and I returned to Malmaison the following day. I heard that at the newly constituted court this intimacy of ours with the Emperor of Russia was very much and very unfavorably criticized.

Monsieur Sosthenes de la Rochefoucauld came and told me how much everyone had been shocked at the date I had chosen to hold a reception for Emperor Alexander. I replied that neither my means nor my position allowed me to give a reception; the date had been chosen a long time in advance and the entire affair had been a purely informal one and not such as would shock anybody.

He then confessed that my mother's intense popularity had given offense at court and there had been rumors going about that she was having funds distributed among the working classes. I smiled at such stories and related the following incident: "While we were at Blois the Emperor's treasure-chest was in danger of being captured. It was therefore judged advisable to pay over to the persons present

the sums due them, especially as the treasury department was behind in its payments. A sum of 600,000 francs was deposited with a local banker on behalf of my mother and myself. This represented only a part of what was due us. A few days later the Duc d'Angoulême while passing through the town seized that deposit, which was our legitimate property, paid his soldiers with it, and we have never seen a penny of it since.

The rest of the Emperor's private funds were turned over to the Provisional Government." By way of conclusion to this story, I said to Monsieur de la Rochefoucauld: "You see how plausible it is that my mother, who is known not to have any money of her own, should distribute money to the discontented elements of the population."

I do not know if what I said convinced him, but I noticed that all the signs of sympathy which the aristocratic class had previously been lavishing on us vanished and instead we were regarded with distinct suspicion.

Jealousy had a great deal to do with this attitude. The Emperor of Russia cut a great figure in the eyes of the old nobility. They thought themselves the only persons worthy of his notice, while he on the contrary, instead of seeking their society, sought that of the very people whom he had come to overthrow.

Consequently, all sorts of stories got about regarding meetings of conspirators at Malmaison, where they made threats against the royal family, and an unfavorable interpretation was placed on the Emperor of Russia's frequent visits.

Even his own ministers became alarmed and spoke to him about the matter, but this did not prevent the visits from continuing as before. One day when my mother was not very well and could not go out, my brother and I took Emperor Alexander to see the famous waterworks at Manly.

On the way there we discussed the general subject of friendship and we referred to that which united Eugene and me. The Emperor also spoke feelingly about the union which existed in his own family, and then turning to my brother he added: "I can hardly believe that I have only known your sister such a short time. She seems to me to be someone I am meeting again and whom I knew in the past. I feel absolutely sure not to be misunderstood when I talk to her."

I thanked him for this tribute and assured him it touched me deeply. Then the conversation changed and we spoke of the recent campaign. He explained to my brother the reason which had caused the delay of the troops marching by way of Troyes for twenty-four hours —that delay of which Emperor Napoleon took advantage to beat the two armies separately at Montmirail.

The Austrians and English had resolved on their arrival at Troyes to declare their intention of refusing negotiations with Emperor Napoleon and to proclaim the return of the Bourbon dynasty. He, on the other hand, had been alone in his determination to push on first to Paris in order to discover there what the French really wanted and give them an opportunity of themselves choosing the monarch they desired.

While this discussion was going on and the Russians were advancing along one route, the Austrians halted for two days; this lack of unity in their movements was fatal to the plans of the Allies, thanks to the skill with which Emperor Napoleon took advantage of their weakness.

Emperor Alexander had asked me questions about the Empress's divorce. I read him a few pages I had written at the time it took place, as well as my letters to Madame de Broc, which had been returned to me after her death.

He seemed deeply touched by what had happened to my mother and declared he could not understand why the Emperor Napoleon had not adopted my brother.

Each time I talked with him our growing intimacy inspired me with an increasing confidence. Acting under an instinct that sprang from the interest I felt in him, I one day took it into my head to remind him of the wish of his subjects, who complained of the manner in which he seemed to neglect the Empress, his wife. I knew that people were anxious to see them reconciled. He repeated several times, "It is altogether impossible."

"But you have no children of your own."

"I have my brothers."

"Do not the wishes of an entire nation count for anything?"

"I cannot go into all these details with you. Please, please do not bring up the subject again. My wife has no better friend than I, but a reunion can never take place."

I said nothing, and the matter was never brought up again. It was with Monsieur de Blacas, one of the King's cabinet ministers, that Monsieur de Nesselrode negotiated the arrangements which concerned us. He asked my reader Mademoiselle Cochelet to notify me that everything had been concluded, and the duchy had been duly created. The paper containing the contract was sent me, but the terms were so unseemly that I immediately decided to refuse. I could not forget who I was, and if the King of France chose to do so I was not prepared to receive any favors from him.

I was quite prepared to exchange my title, but I would only agree to do so as being entitled to a new one by right, not as a disavowal of the rank I had formerly occupied.

My reader took my reply and my refusal to Monsieur de Nesselrode. The advice of the Duc de Vicence was asked. Emperor Alexander declared that he demanded other letters patent, drawn up in terms which I could accept. He rebuked Monsieur de Nesselrode severely for not having shown him the first draft before it was sent me, and presented profuse apologies to me for what had taken place.

This was what was finally stipulated. As the treaty of April 11 conserved all our titles, the letters patent should be drawn up in accordance with that treaty and refer to me as Queen Hortense.

The Duchy of Saint-Leu was bestowed on me. My children were to inherit it after my death, and their father to have no right to it whatsoever. I continued to hesitate, fearing that the hostility which I felt arising against me might disturb my children's life in France.

On the other hand, my love for my native land and my mother's grief at the thought of our being separated out-weighed my scruples. I gave the Duc de Vicence full power of attorney to sign such terms as would conciliate my children's material interest with what I felt I owed to my position and the name I bore.

It distressed me to note that the grief of the Empress was affecting her health. Although the constant demonstrations of affection which she received seemed to dispel her sorrow for a few moments, as soon as she was once more alone with me her eyes would again fill with tears. The picture of the Emperor hurled from his throne and confined to the island of Elba constantly hovered before her and racked her soul.

She turned for solace to all those who had been near him and even sought out that young Polish woman of whom she had been so jealous. She enjoyed seeing her, believing that she must experience the same feelings as her own. Nor was she less tormented as to my brother's future.

Even her own fate was a source of constantly renewed uneasiness. The treaty of April 11 had stipulated that she was to continue to receive one-third of her previous income. Nevertheless, she was obliged to dismiss more than half the members of her household.

Her servants came and wept round her. She did not have the courage to dismiss these faithful attendants and ended by keeping them all. But where could she find means to continue those allowances, amounting to nearly three hundred thousand francs, which she paid out annually? How many people she must make miserable!

Moreover, her too great liberality had caused her to contract a large number of debts that she wished earnestly to pay. Would her diamonds provide enough money to do this? In the midst of all these worries her kindness, her graciousness, the charm of her manner had not altered in the least.

Of all those who owed their lives to her intervention the Marquis de Riviere was the only one who came to see her. Monsieur de Polignac, whose life she had also saved, and to obtain whose pardon she had thrown herself at the Emperor's knees, did not even pay her a courtesy call.

The first symptoms of people's ingratitude are always painful. It is disagreeable to have to complain of the conduct of those for whom one has been glad to do a favor.

Many Frenchmen, having called once, as they doubtless felt they were obliged to do, did not again appear at Malmaison. Other motives led them elsewhere. Only certain foreigners and those Frenchmen whose feelings did not change with changing fortunes continued to come with the same regularity.

The Emperor of Russia was about to hold a review of his troops. He invited my brother to attend it. Eugene asked to be excused, adding that he would have accepted with pleasure anywhere except in France. The Emperor took his hand in a most friendly manner, saying, "I quite understand. Pardon my having invited you."

This is an example of the Emperor's really feminine thoughtfulness. It was this refinement of feeling that made him attractive. He understood everything and seemed even to appreciate the reserve one displayed toward him, since he was conscious of the motives which prompted this reserve.

The reason for my brother's refusal was doubtless the same as that which prevented Monsieur de Flahaut not only from going to call on the Emperor of Russia but from even meeting him at our house. Monsieur de Flahaut admitted all the Emperor of Russia's splendid qualities, recognized the fact that I should be grateful to him for all he had done, but continued to consider him, nevertheless, as an enemy of France, the sight of whom he would prefer to avoid.

On the other hand, the majority of the generals found in Emperor Alexander a defender against the new order that was coming into effect. Delighted with the manners of all these soldiers who were being presented to him the Emperor said to me one day: "How fortunate must be the king who governs a nation which vibrates every time the word 'honor' is pronounced! How much one could do with such material!"

"Those who have remained aloof, and whom you have not had the opportunity of meeting," I replied, "are those who would give you a still more favorable opinion of our army." The Russian Grand Dukes arrived in Paris accompanied by their tutor.

The Emperor Alexander sent them to spend the day at Malmaison. He had said to me before they arrived: "The Empress is extremely alarmed at the idea that my brothers are in Paris. She fears that they may be fascinated by the charms of the French women. I scarcely dare send them to Malmaison."

"Do not worry," I replied. "Although we are surrounded by young and charming girls, I shall play the part of a dragon."

This remark amused him greatly. The young Grand Dukes attracted attention by their fine manners, their courtesy, and the humane sentiments they displayed in regretting the disasters which the war had caused. They had just passed through several of our ruined villages, and tears stood in their eyes as they described what they had seen.

In walking about in the picture gallery at Malmaison both were attracted by the same picture. They examined it closely. It represented a landscape covered with snow. "This reminds us of home," they said, deeply moved.

The Grand Duke Constantin had already been several times at Malmaison. He told us repeatedly that throughout France he had heard only favorable remarks about my mother and myself. He was most

anxious to have a collection of ballads I had composed and had had printed for some of my family circle. I gave him a copy.

I also gave the Emperor Alexander the original manuscript, which is now preserved at the palace of the Hermitage.

The King of Prussia and all his family also came to Malmaison, the same day as the Grand Duke Constantin."

My mother, although far from well, made an effort and came downstairs to receive them. She seemed to have only a bad cold, and her generally robust health prevented anyone from feeling in the least alarmed.

Even I felt sufficiently reassured to go to Paris to attend to some business. The Emperor of Russia, hearing I was there, came to see me. He had just been dining with the King of France. He could not help making remarks about what he had seen, the length of the meals, how much everyone seemed to enjoy them, and even went so far as to say : "The Tuileries have not always been inhabited by the kind of people that live there now; a great man lived there not so very long ago, whereas today ."

He did not conclude his sentence.

I judged it expedient to change the subject. My brother came in from Malmaison, where he had left my mother feeling more poorly. She had been much upset by a newspaper article which spoke of my son who had died in Holland and who had been buried temporarily in a tomb at Notre Dame while his tomb at Saint Denis was being finished.

The paper declared in offensive terms that the body was about to be taken from its present sepulcher and put into the public cemetery. In order not to wound my feelings an effort had been made to keep me from seeing the article, but in the end, I was obliged to read it, so that I could beg the safeguard of the precious remains.

I confess what hurt me the most in the whole matter was to discover how much hatred there was in the hearts of those to whom, from now on, were entrusted the destinies of my native land. I cannot conceive of a jealousy that would go so far as to insult the corpse of an innocent child because in the past he had been the object of certain hopes.

A being whom an entire nation had loved even for an instant should certainly be entitled to more respectful treatment.

There can be no question of either politics or national dignity in such an attitude, which outrages both the sentiments of a race and the heart of a mother. As for me, instead of being grieved at the idea of a possible transfer of the remains, I thought that it might result in my having my son's body at Saint-Leu.

In other words, near me.

Thus, he at any rate would be safe from such base maliciousness. I merely pitied any group of people who allowed themselves to yield to a spirit of vengeance, to whom even a grave was not sacred I foresaw to what lengths of folly such feelings might drive them. I heard—and I prefer to believe it was so—that neither the King nor any of his family had anything to do with this shameful episode, thanks to the Emperor of Russia.

I trust his sympathy will bring him good fortune. Emperor Alexander was to have come to dinner the following day. My mother settled a hundred little details that might increase his comfort and expected to be well enough to get up. When he was leaving, the doctor was not able to conceal from us what his worried air had already indicated: namely, that he found her very ill and that he recommended she be covered with plasters.

Terror-stricken I sent for the best doctors in Paris. To add to my difficulties a very high fever had obliged my brother to take to his bed. Misfortunes surrounded me on every hand, but instead of giving way to my grief I was stimulated by the thought that I must concentrate all my strength and will-power on those who needed my care.

I was about to ask the Emperor to postpone the dinner till another day when he made his appearance considerably ahead of time. I received him, informed him of my fears and took him to see my brother, with whom we arranged that his presence should be kept from my mother lest she be worried thinking he had not been properly entertained.

I returned to her bedside. I told her the Emperor had sent word asking to be excused and saying that he would come another time. "I am sure," she said, "the reason he did not come was because he felt embarrassed not to have anything new to report about your brother's affairs. That must be what kept him away."

I replied I was convinced that matter would be arranged satisfactorily in the end. She repeated several times "You must take it on yourself to speak to the Emperor of Russia about your brother's fate. He is the only one who feels well-disposed toward us. We must not let him leave before a decision has been arrived at."

The physicians hesitated to tell me the truth. They only stated that the illness would be a long one I arranged matters so that I, her attendants, or mine would in turn spend a night sitting up with her. My physician and my maid began. During the day a sort of feverish energy had sustained me.

I was constantly going back and forth from my mother's room to that of my brother, where the Emperor, who only left us in the evening, was keeping him company. I stayed by my mother till late. I had brought the children in to say good night to her. She had sent them away saying,

"The air is not good in here. It might harm them." She also always kept insisting that I leave the room and made such a point of it that the doctor finally forced me to go and take a little rest. It was

impossible for me to sleep. The menace of misfortune seemed to me to be almost unbearable, and at times I would try to turn my mind away and concentrate on other things, as though to escape from some gloomy specter born of my alarm.

Twice I got up to go into my mother's apartment. My maid told me I need not worry. She was resting quietly, and yet she uttered at times these unconnected words "Bonaparte ... the island of Elba ... the King of Rome."

The next day, May 29, was Pentecost. My brother, who had left his bed in spite of his fever, went into my mother's room with me while it was still early. As she caught sight of us she stretched out her arms and spoke a few words which we could not understand. She seemed quite distraught. A few hours later I found such a change in her that for the first time the terrible knowledge that I was about to lose her entered my mind.

I was unable to control my despair. My attendants carried me into the next room. My brother informed me that the sacraments had been sent for, but that nevertheless the doctors had not given up all hope. We went together to hear mass and pray for that life which was so dear to us. Tears streamed from everyone's eyes, and all those about us seemed to share our grief, I went upstairs again to my mother, summoning up all my courage to speak to her quietly of the sacraments she was about to receive and thus prevent her experiencing too great a shock when they should be brought to her.

I sought to seem calm myself in order that she might feel so also. Indeed, I still ventured to hope. But when on entering her room I saw the marked change that had come over her features in less than a half-hour, I was unable to say a word. Not even able to take the hand she stretched out to me I sank down beside her bed. I was carried into my own room. What took place I cannot say.

A few moments later my brother hurried in, took me in his arms, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, "All is over."

She had received the sacraments with the greatest calmness, and her last thoughts were doubtless for her unhappy children.

A moment later my room was filled with all those young women who like myself had just lost their mother. They came to mingle their tears with ours, and it is impossible to describe the grief that reigned about us. How intense was everyone's sorrow! How could anyone resist it? . . . The carriages having been brought up; I was taken to Saint-Leu. I cannot tell what is the sad charm that lingers about a spot where one has just suffered a loss, but when you leave it you seem to be bidding farewell once more to everything you regret.

It was not till I arrived at Saint-Leu that I became conscious of the full extent of my affliction. Such violent and such tragic emotions as those through which I had just passed brought on intense nervous headaches. I was unable to leave my bed.

My brother, alarmed at my condition, nursed me with a tenderness to which I was not accustomed. For the first time in my life I found by my side someone on whom I could call for comfort and support in my hour of distress. I appreciated this deeply, and though my heart was torn with grief yet I still was grateful to Providence for not having deprived me of everything.

Sorrow one shares is softened and becomes easier to bear. From every side marks of sympathy arrived. The foreign monarchs who were in Paris and even the French royal family expressed their regrets. The Emperor of Russia more than anyone else displayed a sympathy at which we could not feel surprised. He wished to attend in person my mother's funeral.

My children went, but not feeling strong enough to go ourselves, we sent word to the Emperor, who sent General Sacken to represent him. When he left Paris, he spent one day at my estate at Saint-Leu, going on from there to England.

He had asked us to prepare a room for him quite informally, and arrived at night. The next morning at ten o'clock my brother brought him into my room. I was too ill to be able to get up yet.

They both breakfasted beside my bed. The Emperor was in mourning as we were. He seemed to feel our sorrow, to share the same sense of loss. I felt as though I had found a brother at the moment when Providence had just deprived me of a being whom I loved.

Our conversation was a melancholy one. The Emperor accused himself of being in a way responsible for our misfortune. He claimed it was due to my mother's grief over what had taken place. The more he seemed to us to be right, the more anxiously we tried to refute his arguments.

He described how the Emperor of Austria had heard of my mother's death. In the morning as he was going out alone, he met a common workman in the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré. This man, not knowing who he was, stopped him and said: "Have you heard the news? That kind woman the Empress Josephine is dead."

This is an example of how widespread the grief was Emperor Alexander received several messengers during the day he spent with us. He wrote dispatches and walked about with my brother. I dressed and came downstairs, and we all had dinner in my little drawing room. He should have left that same evening, but I heard since, he wished to be sure before going that the question of the letters patent creating the Duchy of Saint-Leu had been satisfactorily arranged.

The King had strongly objected to signing them on account of their referring to me under the title of Queen. The Emperor of Russia had been obliged to declare that his troops would remain quartered in Paris until those letters had been sent off.

He received them in the course of the evening, but did not wish to hand them over to me himself. He felt that they had lost much of their value to me, since they were intended to assure that I should remain with my mother, and she now was no more.

He sent for my reader and told her that when it would be possible to discuss business with me she was to tell me I need not make any acknowledgment or express my thanks in any way to the King of France, as he [the Emperor of Russia] was exceedingly annoyed at the reluctance which had been shown in arranging the matter, and that I must not expose myself to a possible rebuff.

The Duc de Vicence came in, in the evening, and informed us that the King had at last signed the treaty of April 11, but that this was due to the vigorous intervention of the Emperor of Russia.

The Duke had at once, with the permission of the government, dispatched one of the Emperor Napoleon's servants to convey this news to him at Elba. The Emperor of Russia spent that night also at Saint-Leu and left very early the following morning for England after telling Eugene he would see him at the Vienna Congress.

My brother and I both wished to write to the Emperor Napoleon to inform him of our recent loss, but the messenger of the Duc de Vicence had already left, and we could not secure permission to send another.

I was most anxious also to let him know how my personal affairs had been arranged, but the Duc de Vicence told me he had already done this, and that after having described the negotiations to the Emperor he had added, "As for Queen Hortense, suitable provisions for her and her children are being arranged in France."

His letters were sent by a servant who was going to Elba with them. It was therefore impossible to write direct, as all correspondence with the Emperor had been forbidden. Therefore, we considered it best to wait till matters had become calmer. In the first few days that followed our bereavement all Paris society came to see me.

So much sympathy with us was liable to offend the government. We already knew that it was distinctly hostile toward us. My brother felt the drawbacks of a prolonged stay in France and he wished to conclude his affairs and leave afterwards for Munich. Monsieur Soulange and Monsieur Devaux were appointed to settle my mother's estate, which people said was a very considerable one.

Yet it consisted only of her country place at Malmaison, the Château of Navarre, which the Emperor had entailed for my brother, her pictures and diamonds, an income of thirty thousand francs in government securities, and her property in Martinique. But as she never understood much about money matters and as she never knew how to say no to anyone who asked her for something, she left about three million francs' worth of debts.

Our business advisors suggested a sale, which they declared would be profitable since everyone was anxious to secure some object that had belonged to her. But it was disagreeable to us to think of all our mother's personal belongings being exposed to the public and knocked down to the highest bidder.

My brother and I therefore agreed that these personal belongings should be given to the young ladies who had been her attendants and whose welfare she looked after. Doubtless in benefiting them

we were carrying out her intentions. The income was divided among them to act as dowries when they married. One of them did so at once.

The servants were so numerous that in order to dismiss them and give them six months' wages we were obliged to borrow two hundred thousand francs. Of all the children my mother had undertaken to educate and care for, we took over only those who were in the greatest distress.

The servants who had been with her for several years received pensions, which we promised to continue. My share of these pensions, not including those I was already paying personally in spite of the change in my position, amounted to more than thirty thousand francs annually.

My mother's maids of honor and her equerry each received a carriage and four horses. Her ladies in waiting received shawls and different souvenirs. We were the last to keep anything for ourselves. It seemed as though our position was assured.

I was to receive an income of four hundred thousand francs, and my brother important domains. Our only thought had been to make other people happy; but, do what we could, was it possible to satisfy everybody?

People were discontented. My mother had been in the habit of giving out annually pensions amounting to between two and three hundred thousand francs. We kept only sixty thousand francs of these pensions. It was said that people were being treated unfairly. Servants who were only entitled to fifteen hundred francs' allowance a year demanded three thousand.

My brother, because he believed that what the Allies would give him would enable them to pay off the debts of my mother and also because I could do nothing for him, took the real estate. I had only half the picture gallery and half the diamonds.

The newspapers talked of this estate as amounting to fifteen millions. We did not consider it worthwhile to deny these reports, especially as the prominent position my mother had occupied for such a long time made such exaggerated figures seem possible.

It was true she had been wealthy, but she gave away everything she had and frequently more besides. People enjoyed enlarging upon the extent of her fortune as well as ours, in order to contrast the luxury that existed at the imperial court at its most dazzling moment with the so-called distress in which the former royal family were supposed to have lived during their exile.

The Duchesse d'Angoulême went everywhere without any jewelry, wearing no diamonds or cashmere shawl, and seemed very much attached to her little English bonnet. Perhaps this calculated simplicity of appearance was to some people a sign of her former misfortunes, and therefore increased their attachment to her, but others considered it a sign of an entirely foreign education and perhaps of that ignorance of these princes regarding the customs and habits of the country they had been called upon to rule.

CHAPTER XIII
THE FIRST RESTORATION (CONTINUED) [JUNE 1, MARCH 4, 1815]

Eugene's Departure—Louis Protests Against the Creation of the Duchy of Saint-Le—A Visit from Madame de Staél and Madame Recamier—Life at Plombières and at Baden-Baden—Hortense Returns to France—The Incident at Saverne—Louis Bonaparte's Lawsuit Against Hortense—A Visit to Louis XVIII—The Queen's Lawyers—Some English Visitors—The Queen's Drawing-Room—The Duchesse de Bassano—The Bourbons.

MY brother felt every day that he should be leaving Paris. Workmen from the suburbs had made a demonstration in front of the Tuileries and demanded work in a peremptory manner. We heard that among their protests Eugene's name had been pronounced.

It became necessary for me to look forward to being deprived of my sole moral support. I felt as though in leaving I me my brother took with him everything one's native land has to offer in the way of protection, and that I was about to find myself in the midst of strangers with pitfalls on every side, pursued by malicious gossip and hounded by treason and ingratitude.

The country of my birth, where no one had a complaint or reproach to make against me, where my family had sought to do good to everyone, had changed and become hostile. I will not be so unjust to those rare friends who have always remained faithful to me as to say that I forgot their presence. But how could they defend me? Even their zeal was occasionally indiscreet. Frequently people holding absolutely contrary political views met in my drawing-room. Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo, a Corsican by birth, Russian Ambassador in Paris, whom his master had asked to safeguard my interests, came there from time to time.

On one occasion he had rather a sharp discussion with a young French colonel, Monsieur de La Woestine, whom misfortune had embittered and Who in the presence of Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo enjoyed deliberately ridiculing political conditions which the Russian envoy had helped bring about. I learned that Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo had complained of the liberty with which seditious opinions were expressed in my house, but was entirely unaware of the fact that this minister had been the personal enemy of Emperor Napoleon.

He informed me of the fact himself, and his vanity went so far as to give me certain details about his knowledge of the characters of the two emperors and of the skill with which he had known how to play one against the other. Being aware that Emperor Alexander was particularly susceptible to personal remarks he had managed, by quoting remarks which Napoleon had made when excited, to increase still further his master's enmity toward him.

It was on this enmity, which he had built up little by little, that he counted to bring about sooner or later the downfall of Emperor Napoleon. For instance, if Napoleon made some friendly offer to Russia which was not replied to immediately, the minister would offset it by drawing Emperor Alexander's attention to some article in the French press attacking his personal character and by suggesting it had been inspired by Emperor Napoleon. Well aware of the effect this would produce he kept alive Emperor

Alexander's irritation by reminders of the other's impatient character. I had had so little contact up to that moment with political circles that it was Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo himself from whom I first learned of his enmity toward Emperor Napoleon.

I had indeed never heard of the man before he presented himself to me in the name of his sovereign, the Emperor of Russia. The knowledge of this feud enlightened me as to the dangers of my position. Even at home my enemies were those who were in power, and my only protectors were foes of my own family.

As my health required a trip to a resort it was agreed that my brother, his wife and I should all meet at Aix-en-Savoie. I wished to have my children accompany me, but the advice of the Duc de Vicence and several other people who knew about political matters was that it was better not to have them leave the country so soon after having been granted the right to remain there. Such an absence might serve as a pretext for breaking the agreements which had been made and for preventing their return.

On the contrary, it was advisable to accustom people to their presence in France. About this time the newspapers published a communication from my husband, who refused in his own name and that of his sons the terms contained in the treaty of April 11.

He also caused the letters he had written on leaving Holland to be printed and even those he had sent by Monsieur Decazes, to the Senate and the Corps Legislatif. Among these papers was included his letter to me which the Emperor had never given me but had mentioned when he expressed his displeasure at seeing a French father refuse French titles for his sons. In this letter my husband forbade me to receive anything from my brother and turned over to me as a source of revenue his private estates in France and Holland. Of these the former did not pay expenses, and the latter did not exist. I confess I considered it extraordinary that my husband should choose the moment when his brother had just been overthrown to court public favor for himself at the Emperor's expense.

Was it not misplaced vanity that caused him to inform the public what terms he had refused at the time of his abdication, since everything he ever possessed had been given him by his brother? Human beings can act as they please, choose their own fate, but they should not try to decide the future of others. Would not his children someday be justified in reproaching him for having deprived them of that noble title, Prince of France, and of the advantages which went with it? It was this renunciation which the Emperor had spoken of as insane.

It was on this important point that I based my resistance to my husband when he now asked me to send him his sons or at least the older boy. His past attitude did not inspire me with confidence as to the future. Yet it was possible I was making a mistake, for in questions of policy, only the result proves whether one has been right or wrong, and the result was something I could not foresee.

I wrote my husband that I should be pleased to take his children often to see him, but I begged him not to deprive them of the future and the nationality which I had won for them.

From London I received a charming letter written by the Emperor of Russia. He doubtless did not wish his ambassador to know that he was writing me for the dispatch had been placed directly in the hands of Monsieur Boutiaguine, secretary of the embassy.

The secretary warned me that, judging by a remark Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo had made, the ambassador had noticed this lack of confidence in him and had been offended by it. Thus, it came about that he first feared the person he was supposed to protect and later came to desire to harm her.

The enthusiasm aroused by the return of peace had given way to a general feeling of unrest. No one yet knew just what was the matter, but the manner in which some people were made much of at court and certain others were neglected showed that in future the privileged class would consist of a little group made up of the men who for twenty-five years had done nothing useful in behalf of their country, or who had even actively fought against her.

The promise of peace and especially of more liberal measures of government had caused the Bourbons to be welcomed, but already the prospect of such measures was threatened by various laws they had introduced. People made fun of certain old-fashioned customs that the government attempted to revive.

The princes had amused themselves by conducting mimic war just outside of Paris. This was considered an unseemly parody of the sad and sanguinary events from the effects of which the capital was still suffering. The Due de Berry believed he could, by an air of petulant ill humor, imitate the Emperor's grave severity and he shocked people's feelings by his attitude.

The more the government felt it was losing the nation's confidence the more it became suspicious and the more mistakes it made.

I had praised the waters of Aix-en-Savoie highly to the Empress Marie Louise and she obtained permission to take a trip there. This greatly worried the police department and French court circles.

They felt themselves in peril on account of a journey undertaken by a woman who to them seemed threatening to recapture what she had not known how to keep. I had made no secret of my plan of meeting my brother at Aix. Monsieur Boutiaguine informed me that our presence there at the same time as the Empress appeared suspicious to the French court.

Even Monsieur de Blacas, one of the King's cabinet ministers, told me he would be pleased if I changed my plans and thus showed my desire not to make the Bourbons uneasy.

I willingly consented, and I wrote my brother that I was going to Plombieres. Before I left, Madame de Staël and Madame Recamier asked to be allowed to call and thank me for my efforts to have their sentence of exile suspended.

Although the Emperor had not consented to my request, they were none the less grateful. They arrived one morning accompanied by Prince August of Prussia.

Madame de Staél asked me many questions about the Emperor, spoke of going to see him on the island of Elba, and wished to know in detail everything he had said about her. I told her that he had judged her severely, but had been more indulgent towards Madame Recamier, whose exile doubtless he would have shortly suspended. She could not conceal her satisfaction at the distinction he made and hastened to call her friend over to tell her what she had just heard. She repeated it with a great deal of emphasis as much as to say,

"You are nothing but a child. People did not consider that you mattered whereas they were afraid of me."

Then she turned to me and said complacently, "Really, you don't think he would have ever let me return to France?" We spoke for some time about the liberty of the press. I, who had never thought about political matters of any kind and who remembered how much I had suffered in my home-life from the license of insult displayed by the English newspapers, attacked this facility for condemning a person on insufficient evidence and for misrepresenting what might be entirely innocent and harmless.

I declared that it was necessary to have a certain power of control over the press on account of our national tendency to make fun of serious subjects. Our excessive appreciation of the ridiculous, which distinguished us from other nations, made us unable either to respect or to admire a person or idea which had been wittily pilloried even unjustly.

It was desirable that the French nation should both respect and admire its rulers, for the day they began to be looked at contemptuously their power was at an end. Madame de Staél easily refuted this, pointing out to me how much more important public welfare was than private interests. She maliciously added that it was clear my ideas were colored by personal experience.

She little suspected that neither the Emperor nor anyone else ever talked to us about politics. It was the first time in my life I had heard such subjects discussed in my presence. Madame de Staél possessed a great deal of charm when she managed to remain feminine, but her decided manner when arguing a point and her dogmatic attitude, natural enough in the case of such a superior mind, made her appear to me far less attractive than I had expected. When I looked at her, I thought that in order to have inspired as many passions as she had either men's love must often be a question of vanity or else she must be endowed with those rare spiritual gifts which alone inspire and preserve affection.

She was very intimate with Madame Recamier. Her fine brain and her mental superiority over the other members of her sex did not diminish the other woman's more timid, more elusive appeal. On the contrary, while Madame de Staél dazzled people by the brilliance of her intellect, her companion captivated them by her winning grace.

Although the distinguished air of Madame de Staél had scored many successes Madame Recamier possessed a remarkable beauty, a gentleness, a kindness and a simple, direct and subtle common sense which also attracted many admirers.

Thus, possessing also those qualities which win men's respectful admiration she was really the Ninon de Lenclos of our day.

I must unconsciously have hurt the pride of authorship in Madame de Staël. As we walked about the garden we spoke of foreign travels and the beauties of other countries, and being very absent-minded I asked whether she had ever been to Italy.

Everybody at once exclaimed, "And 'Corinne'! Have you forgotten 'Corinne'?"

"Of course!" I exclaimed, realizing what I had said.

"But then I read so little of it."

"Do you mean to say you have not read 'Corinne'?" someone inquired anxiously.

"Yes ... No . . . That is to say, I must read it again." People looked at me. No one could understand my speaking of such a work in this manner and especially in front of the author.

An explanation was necessary. It did not seem an appropriate moment to make it.

This was what had occurred. The novel entitled "Corinne" appeared just after I had lost my son. The book was given me to distract me from my melancholy, but overwhelmed as I was with grief, I recalled only a few phrases, some descriptions, and felt a fear of rereading a volume the memory of which was connected with my misfortune.

Madame de Staël's visit made the government so uneasy that the secretary of the Russian Embassy, Monsieur Boutiaguine, informed me of the fact; and this was why I made no attempt to see her again.

I went to take the waters at Plombières accompanied by a single lady in waiting. The place was a melancholy one. The only people I knew there were Monsieur and Madame de Saint-Aulaire and General Delaborde and his wife. I had been expecting my brother for two weeks when I received word asking me to meet him at Baden.

The Grand Duchess of Baden also extended me an invitation. The waters there being about the same as at Plombières I did not hesitate to accept.

There were a great many foreigners at Baden just then. Among them were the Empress of Russia, the King and Queen of Bavaria, the dethroned Queen of Sweden, the Duchess of Hesse-Darmstadt, and the Margravine of Baden, the mother of all these princesses.

As soon as I arrived the King of Bavaria, as usual very kind to me, hastened to call. We exchanged visits with the other princesses and I had no reason not to be pleased with the way in which they received me.

It was evident that they were curious about me. The Emperor of Russia in his letters to his family had often spoken of me, as their friendly attitude showed.

I could not help being pleased with their attentions, which were both marked and affectionate. The Empress of Russia invited me to dinner with all the queens and princesses who happened to be there. She possessed a great dignity of bearing together with a *savoir-parler* that was truly royal.

Her features were distinguished, and it was evident that she must have been very beautiful. Her voice had an inexpressible charm, and her melancholy air made her particularly lovely.

The Queen of Bavaria, her sister, resembled her in many respects. I have always found her so kind and sympathetic toward me that I would not be speaking impartially if I expressed all my admiration for her.

The German princesses possess a certain affability, but in general they are not natural enough. After you have once met them you always find them exactly the same. Most of them are not aware that lofty rank demands simplicity, that kindness is a ruler's greatest charm just as an active charity is his first duty.

Generally, they are too much overawed by the rules of etiquette. While of course a certain amount of formality and reserve is necessary at court, where lack of them would set a bad example, still in domestic circles all constraint should be abolished and greater familiarity be made the rule.

I received a visit from Madame de Krudener whom I had not seen since my trip to Baden in 1809. She now spent all her time taking care of the poor and the unfortunate. I found her still more high-strung than she had been before, exceedingly tender and sensitive in her religious beliefs, placing love before all else in the world.

Her voice had taken on a tone of prophecy and exhortation, her features an inspired expression. She communicated her feelings the more easily to others because she vibrated so intensely with them.

She persuaded people because she herself was so sincerely convinced. Indeed, it required a decidedly strong will to resist the lure of the marvelous visionary universe she described, a universe which her whole-hearted benevolence made still more attractive.

It was hard not to fall a victim to the powers of her imagination. She began by deplored in most moving terms the losses we had suffered, that of a devoted friend, a dearly loved mother, not to mention my lofty position ; and she urged me to bear all this without complaint as a form of trial, the reward of which I should receive in the life to come.

Her words fell on willing ears. I wept as I listened to her, and she mingled her tears with mine.

All at once she said to me in a mysterious tone, "If you wished to do so you could know what had become of those you loved." My sobs immediately ceased. I felt myself in the presence of a madwoman, and my surprise was so great I could not answer.

She noticed this and made no attempt to convince me. Changing the subject, she inquired what my plans were, and when I replied that I intended to stay in France she exclaimed: "Do not stay in France. You do not know the misfortunes that will overtake you. Go to Russia. Only the people who are there will be saved."

"But," I answered, "it was the Emperor of Russia himself who decided that I and my children should remain in France. Perhaps I should have done better to go and live with my brother.

He has not yet received the territory that was promised him but will ask for it at the Congress of Vienna."

"Ah," she replied, "that congress will never end. Mark my words. Emperor Napoleon will leave Elba. He will become greater than ever, but those who have taken his side will be persecuted, pursued and scattered. They will not know where to lay their heads."

"What can I do?" I said. "I am his daughter and if he returns, I must cast my lot with his."

She left me, repeating, "Remember 1815." After all the very real misfortunes that had overtaken me the hallucinations of a mystic could not make much of an impression on me. I also met at the house of Grand Duchess of Baden, Prince Ypsilanti, son of the last hospodar of Wallachia.

He described vividly the sad lot of Greece enslaved under a foreign yoke, and spoke of his joy if he should ever be able to succeed in freeing it from its oppressors. I shared his enthusiasm. I also deplored the fact that instead of exhausting their strength by fighting among themselves the civilized nations did not unite to deliver such an unhappy race.

The generosity of the Prince's feelings pleased me. In accordance with my habit of distributing good-luck charms to those who were about to go into battle I gave him a talisman to protect him from the dangers upon which he seemed about to embark.

I was far from imagining that his dreams were so soon to become realities and that Fate had marked him for a gloomy death in a cell at Munkacs.

I left at the end of August to return to Saint-Leu. I again bade farewell to my brother, who was about to go to Vienna to claim vainly that position which the treaties had stipulated he was to receive, while I instead of enjoying the peace which I so desired was about to find myself again in the midst of intrigues, plots and dangers of every description.

I traveled both day and night. At six o'clock in the evening just as my horses were being changed at Saverne I caught sight of four French officers in a little carriage stopping outside the posting-house.

They exclaimed, "There is Queen Hortense. French officers could never fail to recognize Queen Hortense."

I sought to remain as inconspicuous as possible, for I had no reason to seek too flattering tokens of recognition, and I gave orders to leave immediately. The evening was so lovely that I had my carriage stop farther on at the foot of a hill in order to walk a little way.

To my astonishment I saw these young men follow me. They bowed, greeted me by name and expressed their pleasure at the opportunity of catching a glimpse of the daughter of their Emperor.

They offered to escort me as far as the top of the hill. I accepted, unwilling to repulse their politeness. One of them expressed his despair at seeing France in such a humiliating position. Another declared he would rather be in chains again, as he had been for a long time while a prisoner in England, than witness the disintegration of our army.

They spoke of the enforced abdication of the Emperor, of his anniversary, which they had just celebrated in spite of the rule forbidding such commemorations, and they swore never to rally to a dynasty which had been imposed by foreigners.

I sought to quiet them, insisting on the benefits of peace, the necessity of resigning oneself to circumstance and of resting after having accomplished so many heroic feats.

"No," they all replied, "we cannot live and feel ourselves humiliated. Remember us, if ever you have need of us. We shall always be utterly devoted to you. A word from you will be enough to make us undertake any enterprise. Here are our names and those of the regiments we belong to."

At that moment we arrived at the top of the hill on which stood a triumphal arch just erected for the Duc de Berry, who, so they told me, was expected shortly, but they added, "It is you who will be the first to pass beneath it."

Saying this and catching sight of the guards who were supposed to protect the arch they carried me toward it shouting as they did so, "Long live Queen Hortense!"

"What luck!" they added. "At least this one triumphal arch will have served some useful purpose."

I was anxious to reach the posting-house, and my expression must have been that of a criminal undergoing his punishment, for such a demonstration, particularly under existing conditions, was not at all to my liking.

When at Phalsbourg the officers saw I was keeping on traveling by night they wished to accompany me on horseback. Conscious of the fact that they did not care how far they compromised themselves, I had all the trouble in the world to make them understand that although such devotion touched me it could nevertheless do me a great deal of harm.

They finally left me and I was much relieved. I never saw them again and have never heard them mentioned, but, as my readers will readily understand, when later I heard that these regiments under Marshal Ney were advancing to meet the Emperor, I had no doubt which side they would take. I arrived at Saint-Leu without further incidents but only stayed there a few days.

My doctors had ordered me to take some sea baths after the waters. I left for Havre, again accompanied only by one lady in waiting. I preserved the strictest incognito and was rather annoyed at first not to be able to find a room except in a second-rate inn filled with English people.

Fate, however, was kind to me. I had told my valet de chambre to go and knock at all the doors on the quay to see if there was not a house for rent. The first place he went he encountered an old couple who were about to leave for their country place and who, without knowing who I was, agreed to rent their house on my servant's word that we were respectable people.

I spent two very quiet weeks there, taking my baths, going for walks, reading, all entirely alone. One day I was invited by my landlords to take tea with them in the country. The flower-beds and drawing-room were filled with hortensias. They praised the flower and spoke of the queen after whom it had been named. I had not yet been recognized, but soon rumors of my presence caused my old couple to call.

They were deeply upset, fearing they had been frightfully impolite, and begged my pardon. I at once put them at their ease, and they informed me that this house was the one where I had lived at the age of four with my mother when she was about to sail for Martinique.

Chance had brought me back to it twenty-six years later. How many things had taken place in the meantime! How many events happy and unhappy had occurred to both my country and myself! I was even introduced to the captain who had commanded our ship.

This coincidence delighted my hosts, who had become my friends, and also struck me as curious. I returned to Saint-Leu.

This time I had decided not to leave it again, and to devote myself entirely to my children's education. I felt a sort of satisfaction at the thought that, in the midst of their misfortune, they would at least acquire a firmly grounded education far from the flatteries and distractions of the court and in a situation which required a man to depend on his own ability and to develop what talents he possessed.

The weather was marvelous. I had regained some of my strength and after so many vicissitudes felt that the time of tranquility to which I felt I was entitled had at last come. It did not last long. One morning a young man, Monsieur Briatte, presented himself.

He was stiff in his manner, abrupt in his speech, convinced of his own importance, and thoroughly suited to the negotiation which he had been instructed to carry on. Formerly my husband's

private secretary in Holland, Monsieur Briatte had through his protection obtained a post as referendary at the Cours des Comptes in Paris and kept up a correspondence with his former master.

From the latter he had received orders to come and claim my elder son from me, as the boy's father insisted absolutely on their being together. He even pointed out how kind he was to leave me the younger child.

The tone of the letter which demanded that the child be turned over to Monsieur Briatte was a threatening one. This blow stunned me. Although I had feared it for a long time it fell on me as if unforeseen. My whole life revolved around my children it was for them that I sought to regain my health, for them I still struggled to keep alive.

The thought of my loved ones was the only thing that sustained me amid all my tribulations. The idea of being separated from them filled me with terror. I wished to be able to reason coolly, but my brain throbbed frantically with emotion.

I was clearly aware of all the dangers that threatened my son if he left my side. His father's poor health would result in his neglecting the child's education, and he would not know how to form his character.

Might not even the boy's own health suffer and his natural good disposition become altered? My mind and heart were so completely at one in this dilemma that I took the grave step of refusing my husband's demands.

Daily I summoned up my will-power. Daily I fixed my mind on the idea of resisting his wishes, because I felt it was my duty to do so. It was simple enough for me to point out that my son ought to remain in France and that his personal interest lay in his staying on in his native land. I emphasized this point. I also wrote my husband that I was willing to take his children to see him.

I implored him not to ruin their future but to seek to make it as happy as possible. It was with anxiety I awaited his answer, which it seemed to me would be a question of life and death to me.

Having finished my period of deep mourning I thought of expressing my thanks to the King for having granted me permission to remain in France and for having created a duchy which my children would eventually inherit.

To be sure the Emperor of Russia had told me I should not do this in view of the hostile attitude which Louis XVIII's ministers and the King himself had shown in regard to the issuance of the letters patent.

At the same time, I felt that I owed him a visit. He had become the ruler of that France where I intended to spend the rest of my life as a private citizen, where I had no one to protect me and where I felt myself surrounded with malevolent intrigues and perils of all sorts.

Already I felt that people were looking at me with suspicion and I thought the best way to prevent their having any pretext for adopting this attitude was to pay the King a visit of courtesy.

To do this was less disagreeable to me than my friends imagined, for I felt I was doing right. If I received a cold reception the fault would not be mine. Moreover, I had decided to withdraw if anyone was in the least rude to me. I asked for a private audience. My request was granted without the least difficulty. The following morning at eleven o'clock I presented myself accompanied by a lady in waiting. I had asked Monsieur Lavallotte to act as my escort.

I was ushered into the throne-room where I had so often waited in the past. Nothing had been changed. The "N's" and the eagles were everywhere. I was less troubled by so many memories than one might have thought, for then as always, I was convinced that happiness was not the lot of those who dwell in palaces.

The Duchess of Devonshire was ushered into the hall where I was. She asked the Duc de Gramont, who was also there, to introduce her to me and spoke to me enthusiastically about my mother, whom she would very much have liked to know.

A few moments later the King received me in his study. He rose as I entered, seemed rather embarrassed, asked me to sit down beside him, and said nothing.

I, with the self-confidence of a person who cannot forget who she is and what she is entitled to in spite of what anyone may do to make her forget it, opened the conversation and informed him how anxious I was to see him in order to express my thanks.

The King at once recovered and was throughout agreeable and even courtly. He had been described to me as a man who was witty but hypocritical. I found him, on the contrary, frank and kindly.

He expressed his regret at not having had the privilege of knowing my mother. To this I replied that he owed it to her not to forget her memory since, besides all the good she had done in France generally, she had frequently done favors for persons belonging to his family.

"I am aware of that," he replied "at Martinique she was an excellent royalist." Rather an odd remark to make about the wife of Emperor Napoleon! After I had told him how happy I was to live quietly in France and to bring up my children there, he suddenly asked this question:

"Is it true that one day when Bonaparte was particularly well dressed and asked you what you thought of his uniform you answered, 'The sword of the Constable of France would be much more becoming to you?'"

Astonished at this query I thought it best not to reply. As a matter of fact, I had never made this remark. Formerly, owing to my preference for a quiet, calm life, I had doubtless at some time or other expressed my alarm at a rank which displeased my taste for simplicity, but to admit an impression which people might interpret as a criticism seemed to me to be disloyal toward the Empire.

I sought some way of not offending an elderly man and answered : "Many words were attributed to me in the past without people taking the pains to find out whether they were true or not, but one thing is certainly true today, namely, that completely absorbed by the education of my children the only thing I desire is a retired life."

He felt, I fancy, that he had made an unfortunate remark and sought to remedy it by saying a great many agreeable things. He finally rose; I did likewise. He asked permission to embrace me, kissed my hand, and added that he would always be glad to see me, whether in public or private.

I answered that I considered myself an old woman who had withdrawn from society. The expression of "old woman" made him laugh. I added that I had no intention of going out in society any more, but if he wished it, I should be glad to see him occasionally informally.

During the conversation he seemed to wish to have me meet other members of his family, but I did not feel that it was obligatory for me to do so. Moreover, everything that I had heard about them, their personalities, their past and their efforts to efface it did not make me at all anxious to see them.

I thought that this one visit was enough. After my reception by the King, the Duc de Gramont and the other members of court circles, some of whom I knew and some of whom were new to me, came up and asked if I had been satisfied with my reception. I replied I had every reason to be pleased, and they all conducted me back to my carriage.

When I returned home all my friends inquired if I was pleased with my interview and exclaimed, "If the King is kind to you, we shall all rally to him!" The King told everyone about our conversation and praised me highly.

The friendship of the Emperor of Russia had already made me many enemies. The praises of the King completed the hostility which all the prominent people in society felt toward me. It was said that the Duchesse d'Angoulême herself did not conceal her displeasure.

The favorite courtiers even went so far as to tease the King about his liking for me and the means by which I might become free to marry him. At any rate for several days I formed the chief topic of conversation at court.

Certain remarks were repeated to me. The King had said: "I never met a woman, and I have known a great many, who was more distinguished in her bearing, more agreeable in her manners."

To this the Duc de Duras replied: "It is true, Sire, she is charming. It is a pity she is so ill-advised by her friends. Her only intimates are young men who criticize your government and are your Majesty's personal enemies."

Everyone was silent and the King did not continue the conversation. This was the beginning of that new life, which I intended to be so peaceful and which jealousy, a little social success, many domestic troubles were about to make so stormy.

My household consisted only of Madame de Boubers, who had returned to me after the departure of the King of Rome; Mademoiselle Courtin, a young woman I had had educated at Ecouen, and Mademoiselle Cochelet, my former reader. A curious chain of circumstances had caused the latter to become the intermediary between our household and the Emperor of Russia.

She wrote him and received very cordial replies. That was enough to make people think she was an important character in European diplomatic circles, and there was gossip about her and her imaginary intrigues. I had also kept with me as gentlemen in waiting Monsieur de Marmol and Monsieur Devaux, and Abbe Bertrand for my children.

I still lived at Saint-Leu. The village priest, a kindly soul who was fond of me, informed me, when he came back from a short trip to Paris, that already I was being accused of holding secret meetings out there in the country.

I could not imagine the basis for such rumors as I received only a few friends. We spent our days taking walks, drawing, playing, singing or reading, and those who came to see me immediately adopted our habits.

The visitors who had never attempted to sketch before frequently furnished amusement for those who were more advanced in this art, but, one and all, they were obliged to work, and the drawing-room at times looked like a classroom, while its occupants enjoyed the simple gaiety of school children.

My husband's letter replying to the one I had written him suddenly arrived to disturb these innocent pastimes. He refused to listen to my arguments and threatened that unless my son joined him immediately, he would take legal action.

I found myself therefore obliged to leave the country where I had expected to stay all winter and establish myself in Paris in order to secure proper legal advice. I was in despair, the more so as I was utterly ignorant about matters of this sort and did not know whom to ask about them. I was immovable only on one point, the impossibility of letting my son leave me, the wish to keep him with me at any cost.

My friends pointed out to me that in my position the scandal of a lawsuit would do me a great deal of harm, for people would exploit the slightest accusation brought against me. Then, too, it was the policy of the government to do everything it could to discredit the name I bore.

Even my brother wrote me from Vienna that he and the Emperor of Russia both considered that I ought not to involve myself in such a lawsuit. I understood all their arguments. I even knew, beyond a doubt, that the government desired to make the case sufficiently sensational to distract the public's

attention from the debates in the Chamber of Deputies. But when I weighed all this against the loss of my son, and what I feared the departure would mean to him, I considered that by going into court I was making a necessary sacrifice to insure his happiness.

I preferred to risk exposing myself to public censure rather than to lose my child. I was obliged to follow blindly the advice of my lawyers, for I scarcely knew what a lawsuit was. My chief advisor was Monsieur Bonnet, and he chose as advisors Bellart, Laborie and Delacroix-Frainville. I turned over to them all my papers, all my husband's letters to me, his act of abdication, the papers which he and the Emperor had given me regarding my children, and which until then had made me their sole guardian.

My heart broke every time I saw these strangers rummaging about my domestic secrets and preparing to inform the public about all those matters which my husband and I should have kept to ourselves. I wrote him again saying that in the spring I would bring my children to see him, but asking him to spare them to me for at least this winter.

My husband, however, insisted that the case should come up immediately and his agent, so proud of representing even in a minor capacity a King, although one who had been dethroned, did everything he could to embitter matters instead of trying to conciliate them. He would consent to no delay, no mutual agreement of any kind and declared that he was acting in behalf of a father.

The sufferings this trial caused me are something unimaginable. The majority of lawyers when they handle a case think primarily of themselves. They wish to attract attention and they do not sufficiently adopt their client's point of view. I had expressly ordered Monsieur Bonnet to refer to my husband only in polite terms, to remember the name I bore and wished to have respected, and especially not to mention at any time the Emperor Napoleon except in such a manner as I might have used myself. But he paid little attention to what I said.

Already he was more busy turning over in his mind some effective phrase, some witty remark which he could make during the trial, than considering my peculiar situation or studying how he could respect certain proprieties to which I attached importance. Moreover, he seemed more anxious about his own reputation than about mine.

The first newspaper article which appeared was intended to hurt my husband. I was extremely sorry, and someone acting at my request undertook to have printed the next day some favorable comments on the person who had been criticized.

It was amusing to think that I should be at the same time defending myself against my husband and defending him against others. Other articles appeared that made fun of both of us. In such cases I was always the more severely treated of the two.

I was equally hurt by the accusation made by my husband's lawyer that I had abandoned in his hour of misfortune the man from whose rise in rank I had benefited. Such a remark addressed to me who had wasted my youth and my strength in trying to satisfy a being whose morbid temperament was dragging me to my grave!

My conscience was too much above such accusations to be affected by them. What grieved me was they should be thus made public. Ah, how well I had chosen my motto Moins connue, moins troublée! (The less known, the less criticized!) But the more I appreciated the joys of living a retired life, the more Fate seemed to upset my plans by making me the center of an agitated and troubled scene.

I was told that it was absolutely necessary for me to make certain advances to the judges, and have someone who was favorable to me call on them afterwards. I could not believe this was true. It seemed that such an action would be unworthy of justice and of my cause. Monsieur Courtin, procureur du Roi, who was supposed to sum up the case, called on me one morning in reply to an invitation from one of my friends. What could I tell him about the case? I wished to keep my son. He knew this as well as I did.

Consequently, instead of speaking of the subject he related to me, under the most formal promise of secrecy, an extraordinary investigation he had been asked to make a few days before. It seemed that a certain Monsieur de Maubreuil, after having stolen all the diamonds belonging to the Queen of Westphalia, had been arrested by request of the Emperor of Russia.

The Russian minister had received orders to follow up the matter and to try to find the diamonds. The French government had been obliged to take up the investigation. At the time of his first examination Maubreuil had declared to Monsieur Courtin that during the brief period when the Provisional Government was in office the Prince of Benevento [Talleyrand] had sent for him and ordered him to assassinate all the members of Napoleon's family.

Monsieur Laborie, he said, had given him further detailed instructions, and he had set out armed with full authority when a sudden thought caused him to hesitate.

He was not sure whether this order included the Empress Marie Louise and her son or whether they were to be considered as belonging to the Austrian imperial family. He had feared to make a mistake and returned to ask Monsieur Laborie. Laborie had replied impatiently, "Oh, those two! Do as you please about them. The great thing is to act quickly."

The procureur du Roi had sent a report of this examination to the government at once, in spite of the request of the Russian minister not to do so. The affair had been suppressed, and Monsieur de Maubreuil placed in prison indefinitely.

I promised Monsieur Courtin not to repeat this and kept my word. Imagine my feelings when I found myself face to face with the man whom one of his brother lawyers had chosen to defend my case, face to face with this same Laborie, who shortly before had given orders for the murder of my entire family. I looked at him fixedly. He inspired me with pity rather than horror.

I felt that in spite of the deceitfulness of his manner he must be extremely embarrassed when in my presence. What thoughts must have been his when he recalled that horrible plan!

This conversation with Monsieur Courtin left me no doubt as to the number of enemies who surrounded me and from whom the quietest, most retired life had not been able to free me. I kept daily discovering new ones. They detested me so much that they could not forgive me for having an assured position, a household and a few friends.

Those who were under obligation to me were the ones who most resented my presence. They could not pardon the fact that they owed me and my family so much. They considered it a crime on my part, and consequently it was easy for them to say: "It is at her house the conspirators meet. The King and his family are insulted there. No one would think of being seen at such a place."

If the least sign of unrest appeared in some corner of France I was at once supposed to be the instigator of it. It was by remarks like this that those who were indebted to me for favors sought to pay their debts, although they might have realized that if plotting were going on, if remarks were being made about the King, my personal position was such a delicate one and my house was certainly so closely watched that it was the last spot where any political demonstration was likely to be made.

Only on one occasion, when Messieurs de Broglie, de Le Becloyere, de Flahaut, de Segur, Lavallette and Perregaux all happened to be calling at the same time, a discussion came up as to whether, as an appeal for those national liberties which had been promised but not granted, General Exelmans should not be advised to refuse to obey an order from the government which arbitrarily forbade his remaining in Paris.

The General at the time was not in active service, and everyone agreed that a protest ought to be made against the order. I rose, telling these gentlemen that as the subject they were discussing was too serious for me I should leave them to continue it among themselves, and I withdrew to my apartment.

The party at once broke up, and from then on, no political matters were ever talked of in my presence. When I had come to live in Paris on account of my miserable lawsuit, I had expected to receive only a few intimate friends. All this talk of conspiracies, however, made me decide to hold a reception once a week, to which I would invite some of those English people who in vain had asked to be presented to me.

In admitting them to my circle I hoped they would repeat impartially what they saw going on there and consequently help make the true facts known which so many people sought to misinterpret. I was not wrong.

A Mr. Bruce, a young Englishman whom I had met several times and who had pleased me with his simplicity and idealism, and his accounts of the journeys he had made in Africa, happened to be at the house of the Duchesse de Mouchy.

The hostess, Madame Moreau and a Lady Hamilton were expressing their astonishment that the King allowed me to remain in France and described my receptions as being in reality meetings of conspirators against the government.

Mr. Bruce protested violently against such statements. "You ladies do not attend these receptions, and I have done so. I declare that it is the only house in Paris where one finds the atmosphere of a true French drawing-room, which was so justly famous throughout Europe and which no longer exists in your own country. There at least people converse without discussing politics.

The topics are literature and the arts, and one never hears scandal about anybody." In this case injustice had brought me a partisan.

I had given Monsieur Boutiaguine, the Russian chargé d'affaires, permission to come to the house even when I was at home only to my intimate friends. I did not fear to have anyone see what went on there. I avoided all arguments about political matters and was delighted to think that they were no longer any concern of mine.

Yet at the same time how could I remain deaf to the complaints of Frenchmen who saw themselves humiliated in their own country while foreigners ruled in their place? All I could do was to attempt to calm their anger, but new incidents provoked fresh outbursts.

The brother of the famous Georges Cadoudal had just received a title. Was it possible that the Bourbons so openly admitted they were the accomplices of an assassin?

Madame Moreau was authorized to assume the title of marchale and her husband had died fighting against us. I was asked to recommend someone to Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo in order to obtain a post and he then made the following naive remark to me: "One cannot count on Monsieur de Blacas for anything. Would you believe it? He promised for a long time a post to a man to whom we certainly owe a favor since he helped us capture Paris, and he has not yet secured it."

I could not say a word. I was dumfounded. I was ashamed at the idea of recommending a man who really deserved something to a person who dared boast to me that he was helping a traitor. Thus my country had been enslaved.

It was foreigners who made her laws. How could one blame those who were unable to forget it had been France that only yesterday had dictated to the rest of Europe? But I felt we must suppress our irritation. The thought of the hotheadedness of our young Frenchmen alarmed me.

Every day they became more incensed, while I, constantly prudent, sought to use this very memory of our former grandeur to bring them back to a more reasonable state of mind. I pointed out to them that our armies had won for the French nation the highest honors that could be attained and that a period of calm was needed properly to appreciate those honors.

It was time they became acquainted with and grew to appreciate the benefits of peace, and I urged them to do so. Thus, by degrees soothing the indignation the unfortunate political situation provoked I brought them to discuss subjects less perilous and more enjoyable to all.

Always our amusements were the same. Billiards, music, reading aloud occupied our evenings. I never spent an evening away from home. My drawing-room became a spot so well known and so admired on account of the distinguished people who were to be found there that this mild social success aroused other animosities against me even more to be dreaded than political enmities—those of young women, whose attacks were not limited to the field of politics.

Monsieur de Flahaut, Monsieur de La Bedoyère, Monsieur de Latour-Maubourg, Monsieur de Canouville, Monsieur de Lascours had been in the habit of going every evening to the house of Madame de Girardin.

Madame Alfred de Noailles, one of the young women who had gone out to meet the Allies the day of the fall of Paris, also went there. She was agreeable, animated and was one of the people who contributed the most to make these evenings a success.

The sort of struggle that went on between the partisans of the different political parties gave a particularly spirited tone to the conversation, and since it is always awkward to declare oneself the enemy of a pretty woman, the discussions were just violent enough to be renewed the following day.

Madame de Noailles had earnestly advised these gentlemen to let bygones be bygones and to make their peace with the new court party. But her efforts had been useless. They persisted in continuing the line of conduct they had already selected. She therefore no longer attempted to persuade them but displayed her preference for the company of young men of promise, whom she even allowed to jest at her former more old-fashioned friends, thus showing that she would rather quarrel than be bored.

On my arrival from Saint-Leu all these gentlemen, who with Messieurs de Segur, Lavallette, de Broglie, Mollien and Mole had always come to my receptions, returned to them immediately.

This was doubtless the reason for which Madame Alfred de Noailles hated me cordially. I was constantly being made a target for her attacks. I am not confusing her with her cousin Madame Juste de Noailles, who was always gentle and kind.

Madame Alfred de Noailles said one day in her own home in the presence of a number of people that my house served as the headquarters for a group of extremely dangerous men. She added that I stimulated their ardor, that steps should be taken to guard against the result of their conspiring, that Monsieur de La Bedoyère was an out-and-out Jacobin.

In short, they all had something unpleasant said about them. They heard of this from one quarter or another, Monsieur de La Bedoyère from his wife, one of whose friends was present, and I from Monsieur Boutiaguine, for members of foreign embassies were also present.

My friends were furious that a young woman who had been brought up with me should try to do me such grave harm, disturb my peace of mind and endanger the health of my children by taking advantage of the delicacy of my present position.

Thus, undue enmity provoked excessive partisanship, and I, desiring only to be left in peace, found myself between the upper and the nether millstone. How was I to put an end to this state of things? One day at a dinner given by Madame de Girardin my young defenders agreed not to speak to Madame Alfred de Noailles.

She demanded an explanation, which no one would give her. Thus, the situation became still more involved. I disapproved of this act of rudeness toward any woman. I said as much and continually tried to pour oil on the troubled waters.

It was impossible to restore peace. There was, moreover, another reason for complaint against me. The Duchesse de Mouchy, Madame de Noailles' mother, lived just across the street from me.

She had a day on which she received her friends. But only a few cabs and carriages ever drove up to her door, and these were obliged to make way for the considerably larger number of vehicles which stopped in front of my house. It was out of the question for her to continue to submit to such a superiority on my part, especially as one would have expected recent events to have done away with it.

It seemed difficult to accept the fact that some little of the prestige of my former rank still remained and that having in the past only been attached to my friends they should not all have abandoned me.

The hostility of these ladies found it more convenient to explain this loyalty, which my misfortunes had perhaps increased, as a political cabal than to attribute it to its natural cause. The persistent animosity this coterie displayed toward me was an example of that which many other circles manifested toward anything that belonged to the former regime.

The two parties were constantly observing one another, estimating one another's strength and growing more and more actively hostile. It was the misfortune of princes summoned to reign under such conditions that they could not count on the loyalty of their subjects, and this lack of confidence caused them to take steps that still further envenomed matters.

Many Chouans came up to Paris. They formed themselves into a separate regiment entirely composed of former exiles whom the princes themselves protected. Several former French officers who were in need of a post attempted at once to join.

Their request for admission was rejected as undesirable because they had not fought in the English Army, or in the insurrections in La Vendee or with the Prince of Conde. On being informed of this fact our officers always went out armed.

Fears, which were certainly absurd, were entertained that we were on the eve Saint Bartholomew. People took precautions as though it were possible for such atrocities ever to be repeated.

Nor was the other party more reassured. The emigrants had returned to France, and whose minds were still filled with recollections of the Revolution, imagined constantly that the army and the working classes were on the point of uniting against them.

I had an indication of this in connection with an invitation I felt obliged to send Monsieur le Marquis de Riviere, aide-de-camp to the Comte d'Artois and was the only person who had not been ungrateful toward my mother; he had even renewed his expressions of gratitude to me.

I sent my valet de chambre to invite him to dinner.

Just as my servant arrived at the house of the Marquis two drunken soldiers were quarreling in the street.

He knocked on the door of the apartment and heard exclamations of dismay from within. A man's voice exclaimed, "Bring me my sword."

A woman answered: "No, you must not go out; I implore you, do not risk your life. Don't you hear them knocking? They have come to assassinate us."

Although my servant kept calling from the other side of the door that he had only come with a dinner invitation he could not make himself understood.

The commotion was so great that it was hour before he managed to explain. At length the door opened and revealed the wife still holding onto her husband, the husband still grasping his naked sword, and as my name, which had been pronounced several times, did not by any means reassure them, calm was not reestablished until they had fully grasped

the fact that it was merely an invitation to dinner.

One day when I was even more worried than usual about the result of my lawsuit, Monsieur Fleury de Chaboulon, a young auditor whom I hardly knew, called on me with a recommendation from the lady in waiting of one of my friends.

He said to me that France had fallen so low it was impossible for a man of honor to remain there any longer, and he had therefore decided to go to Elba and take a position in the service of Emperor Napoleon.

I urged him to reconsider his decision, which seemed to me to be an impulsive one, for as the Emperor had never met him, he ran the risk of not proving acceptable. But he had made up his mind to carry out his plan. As long as his name would be included among those of the people who had served the Emperor, he desired no other recompense or glory.

He undertook to deliver various verbal messages for me, but declined to carry anything in writing. I therefore asked him to assure the Emperor of my devotion, which his misfortunes had only increased.

Since I was constantly seeking means which would help me keep my children with me, and since, according to what my lawyers said, an authorization in the Emperor's handwriting approving my separation from my husband would have removed all possible obstacles, I requested Monsieur Fleury to secure this for me.

In regard to any other matter about which I should have wished to communicate with the Emperor I should never have dared confide it to a man whom I scarcely knew and who might have been sent to me to lead me into a trap.

This was the only Frenchman who ever set out for Elba, and I am sure he had no secret mission of any kind. Meanwhile nothing was being done toward executing the treaty of April 11, which the King had signed.

I knew that the Emperor when he left Fontainebleau had scarcely enough money with him to pay his expenses for a few months. During the few moments I had spent at Rambouillet I had seen the Empress send him a sum of I believe, seven hundred thousand francs, the rest of his personal funds having been seized and taken back to Paris. He had never thought to make any separate provision for himself, considering his lot bound up with that of France, and he had no private means of any kind.

For his safety, for his personal protection even, it was absolutely necessary he maintain his body-guard. The thought that he might shortly find himself obliged to dismiss it, because the treaty he had signed was not being carried out, was painful to me.

I felt myself in a way authorized by my position in France to act on his behalf; but to whom should I address myself? Who had the power to give him what he was justly entitled to? Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo no longer came to my house. Lord Wellington was the English Ambassador in Paris.

He gave brilliant entertainments, did the honors of the capital and seemed to be its ruler. He had asked through Madame Recamier to be presented to me at my home. I took advantage of this opportunity in the hope that as a generous enemy he would perhaps consider it due to his own honor to supervise the execution of treaties of which his government was one of the signatories.

I received him and, on another occasion, asked him to dine. Beneath an exterior which at first seemed to lack distinction it was easy to see that he possessed that pride so characteristically English based on a knowledge of his personal merits.

He had that keenness of glance which indicates greater ability as an observer than as a creative genius, and this caused him to resemble a diplomat rather than a military leader. He spoke to me in a tone of chilly admiration regarding the Emperor's great military gifts and alluded with a touch of national pride to the obstinacy with which England had declined to recognize him.

He blamed the French government for not having fulfilled the conditions stipulated in the treaty with the Emperor and assured me he would again call their attention to the sacred character of their obligations.

One evening while I was at the piano as usual word was brought me that the clerk of my municipal parish had come to announce that the following morning the government would take possession of all my property and attach everything I owned.

I could not understand the reason for such an astounding act. He begged me to believe his personal devotion to my interests, because I had once chanced to do something for a member of his family.

He wished to prove this by informing me what was to take place sufficiently in advance to give me time to remove my most precious belongings to a place of safety. He added that I could verify the truth of his statements by sending someone to the house of Cardinal Fesch where for the last two hours the officials had been engaged in placing the official seal on all the Cardinal's property.

This I did and found out that the information was true. I therefore hastened to entrust my diamonds to the persons who happened to be present.

This was what had become of that perfect tranquility which I had been planning to enjoy after all the storms I had weathered. This was the liberty I had so eagerly desired. The following morning, I received the official announcement that the seals were to be affixed to all the property, furniture and real estate belonging to the members of the Emperor's family. And this in spite of the treaty of April 11 which had stipulated that they could keep their property in France.

The order was carried out as regards all members of the imperial family, but on my declaring that I had nothing which belonged to my husband it was admitted that I should not be included on account of the clause covering my special case.

Nevertheless, all these violations of the treaty contributed to disturb my peace of mind. I began to regret the combination of circumstances which had caused me to remain in my own country and I resolved as soon as my lawsuit was over to withdraw to Pregny, a little estate I owned on the shores of Lake Geneva.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère, whom the Emperor had made colonel of an infantry regiment during the last campaign in Germany, had returned to Paris to nurse the wound he had received at Bautzen.

His mother was very anxious he should marry Mademoiselle de Chastellux, a young and pretty woman. For a long time, he had refused to do so, although I also had asked him to agree and he declared he valued my advice very highly.

Finally, he had given in to us. I have already mentioned that I had declined the services he had come to offer me at the moment of the capitulation of Paris.

Following this refusal, in spite of the attachment of his family to the Bourbons, he felt that the moment French territory had been invaded the Emperor's cause became that of the nation, and he had proceeded to Fontainebleau where he had remained till after the Emperor's departure.

On his return he had not in any way expressed his adhesion to the new order, had taken no new oath of allegiance, nor sought to hide his opinions, although his regiment had been left him.

He expected to be dismissed from the army. Constantly quarreling with his wife's family, he preferred to spend his evenings at my home. When I reproached him with thus deserting a young, newly married bride he told me that it was with her consent, in order to avoid disputes with his brother-in-law, and that he would be most happy to present her to me after she had had her baby.

Although he never expressed it in so many words, his devotion to me and my interests, which he considered were those of his country, had remained unchanged.

He went every day to court to attend my trial and came back to report to me what had taken place. The more I tried to calm his indignation against my enemies, the more he was revolted by their injustice toward me.

He, like his cousin, Monsieur de Flahaut, no longer wore the Cross of the Legion of Honor. People noticed this and commented on it, attributing it to my influence. I spoke to them about it. They avowed they could no longer regard as a token of distinction a decoration now lavished on men whose only claim to it was that they had held up stage-coaches.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère, however, received an order to join his regiment stationed at Chambery. He made various excuses for tarrying, but at length came to say good-by to me. In our conversations he had enjoyed frightening me by describing the rash resolutions he was liable to take on account of the way things were going; so one morning when I was alone he asked me, half in jest half in earnest, what I should say if I were to hear that his regiment had adopted the tricolor cockade and the eagles.

Although this seemed like a jest, I explained to him the nature of my fears, which he thus sought to arouse. I told him that one must always feel responsible for the result of one's actions on others and that a man would bitterly regret having committed an act which launched his country on a course that might prove fatal to her.

Without listening to my reply, he added: "I would not hesitate if I knew anyone skillful enough to assume the leadership of such a movement, but no one would dare do so at present. The marshals submit quietly to their country's humiliation because they are enjoying the benefits the Emperor secured for them. To be sure I know one man whom all our hopes are based on, but he holds exaggerated ideas of honor and loyalty. I had a chance to judge Prince Eugene when I acted as his aide-

de-camp. He has made up his mind he will not deviate from the course he has chosen, and in order to be a great man one must take chances.

The Emperor is the only one who with his genius for command could revive the sentiment of national honor, but his fate is sealed, and he is in retirement. As for me I can only recognize my humiliation."

I again did what I could to calm this state of over-excitement, and when I thought my advice had produced its result, I bade him good-by. The Duchesse de Bassano was one of my most frequent visitors. She came without her husband, who seldom went out and who perhaps would have feared arousing the suspicions of the police if he had accompanied her more than once a month.

Malicious gossip involved him with various political intrigues. Tall, beautiful, with a virginal expression, the Duchesse de Bassano had a calm and sweet face, which her happy existence had preserved and which the vivacity of her emotions rendered the more striking.

She was keenly touched by our recent misfortunes and did not sufficiently conceal her grief over what had taken place. Her husband was severely criticized. The most serious fault he was accused of was that he had had an unfortunate influence over the Emperor.

People forget that a genius is his own guide. The Duke's character and gifts were of the kind which best suited the monarch who had placed confidence in him. The closer the Duke came to his master the more he was obliged to submit to the Emperor's superiority. His weaknesses were too firm an attachment to and too blind an admiration for his sovereign.

His principal merit was to have loved and understood a great man. I also saw frequently the Duchesse de Raguse. She was separated from her husband, childless, and possessed a large fortune.

She could not be happy; her heart needed some outlet. She overestimated the gifts friendship has to offer and the effects of misfortune. She was loyal in her attachments and frequently cynical in her judgments. People considered her changeable and capricious, but that was because wealth cannot cure mistakes of the heart. Monsieur Sosthenes de la Rochefoucauld, who knew my respect and esteem for all sincere opinions, even those contrary to my own cause, and who continued to come and see me in spite of political changes, explained to me his conduct in connection with what had recently taken place.

"I never served the Emperor," he said. One day he asked rather naively why so many people were dissatisfied. The King, he declared, had kept everyone at his post; the former army had not been destroyed ranks and titles had been respected.

He could not understand why there were so many complaints. I answered with a smile which was slightly malicious: "The officers only keep what they have earned legitimately, but you as well as many others who never went outside of Paris are now wearing the double epaulettes of a colonel. Do

you think they consider this right and that they are not alarmed about what may happen in the future?" But I listened without contradicting him when he spoke of the various members of the royal family.

"As far as the King is concerned," he said, "he at least cannot be accused of not being liberal enough. His attitude must even satisfy the Jacobins." The Comte d'Artois seemed to him a true French knight, gracious in manner, witty and well-mannered. The Duchesse d'Angoulême was a masterful woman, a second Maria Theresa, whose firmness of character showed that someday she would make a great queen. The Duc d'Angoulême was shy but well-informed, and every day those who came in contact with him found that he knew more than they would have suspected. The Duc de Berry was a true Henry IV, rather frivolous, a trifle outspoken, but gallant and full of wit, which did not prevent his having a kind heart. Thus, one sees those whom one loves. Might all kings inspire such sentiments.

One day he called to say good-by to me. The Duchesse d'Angoulême was leaving for Bordeaux and he was to be allowed to accompany her. "People," he told me, "are waiting for her with the greatest impatience. All sorts of entertainments are being prepared. Enthusiasm is at its height, and I am delighted personally to participate in these demonstrations of popular rejoicings." The intensity with which he uttered the last sentence made me smile. He noticed it and inquired the reason. "You seem to me to be very young," I answered, "since you attach so much importance to this sort of enthusiasm. People always cheer for anything that arrives with pomp and ceremony and frequently that which the crowd has applauded one day it overthrows the next. I have seen so many of these demonstrations that I can estimate them at their just value."

Now it was his turn to smile and I readily guessed why. Therefore, I added: "Ah, you think perhaps that those acclamations which I may have heard or which may have been addressed to me were perhaps paid for? The slightest incident will show you that those you consider sincere possess no more weight."

These remarks, which were entirely general and which I owed to my experiences, probably appeared to him a little later the explanation of those great events regarding which he thought I was already informed. For since I was able to judge so accurately, I must have known before-hand what was going to happen.

This is the way enthusiasts form their opinions, and how those who are enthusiasts are judged in turn. The verdict which was to decide my son's fate was to be pronounced in the latter part of February. I awaited the result of the trial in a painful anxiety mingled with certain hopes due to the favorable attitude of the judges. But I heard from Monsieur Devaux that sentence had been postponed for a week.

This delay made me think what afterwards proved to be the case, that the government, being anxious to have my children leave France, exercised its influence in my affairs.

CHAPTER XIV
THE RETURN OF THE EMPEROR (MARCH 5-MARCH 21, 1815)

The Fifth of March, 1815—The Wife of Marshal Ney: The Emperor's Advance—The Queen Seeks Refuge with Madame Lefebre—While Paris Waits—The Emperor Enters His Capital—Hortense Is Received by Napoleon—A Great Review—At the Tuileries.

ON Monday, March 5, as I was coming back from my drive absorbed in melancholy thoughts, Lord Kinnaird appeared on horseback beside my carriage and said,

"Have you heard the great news, madame? Emperor Napoleon has landed at Cannes." I was amazed. He added that he had just left the house of the Duc d'Orleans, who was leaving for Lyons whither the Comte d'Artois had preceded him, and that the court was very much excited.

My first thought was for my children. I asked, "that they are in any danger?"

"No, I do not think so," he answered, "although perhaps they may be held as hostages." The idea of such a thing filled me with alarm.

He, being English, feared a popular uprising against foreigners and in favor of the Emperor, and was so alarmed that I offered him and all his family my house as refuge in case such a rising took place, for I knew that I had nothing to fear from the masses. On returning home I immediately sent my children to the apartment of one of my woman friends who was in the country, with orders not to send me word about them unless they were ill. Once this cause for anxiety was removed, I felt stronger to face whatever events might take place.

It was a Monday, the day on which, as a rule, I had the most visitors. I had invited several people, among them Comtesse de Laval, who was a Russian lady by birth and friend of the Comte de Blacas. For a moment I hesitated whether I had better leave word I was not at home. I could hide nothing in regard to what was taking place. I had nothing to hide, so I preferred to show myself in order to avoid any false interpretations of my conduct.

Curiosity, desire for news, general nervousness caused more people to come to see me than usual. I behaved as though I knew nothing about what had happened, and taking the cue from me no one else said a word about it either.

Nevertheless, the following morning all Paris heard how my drawing-room had echoed with congratulations, how verses had been sung in honor of the Emperor and how everyone had expressed hopes for his success.

People even went so far as to give the name of the author of the verses—a Monsieur Etienne, whom I had never seen and who was said to have been present at my house. To such lengths will political partisanship go.

The persons who really were present did nothing to refute these tales they knew they were false, but feared to destroy a piece of mischievous gossip which it seemed politic to encourage.

Young Madame de Turpin, the wife of my mother's chamberlain, whose benefactress I had always been, said to one of my maids of honor, Madame d'Arjuzon, that people assured her seditious songs had been sung.

"But," said Madame d'Arjuzon, "you were at that reception, weren't you?"

"Yes," replied Madame Turpin.

"Well, did you hear anything?"

"No, but probably it happened after I had left." Never had my emotions been so varied. Would the Emperor succeed? Would he fail? What fate awaited him? And also, what was going to happen to France?

Was it not threatened with a civil war in addition, perhaps, to a foreign conflict?

My friends who had so loudly protested against the Bourbons, were they in no danger of retaliatory measures? Then too there was the Bourbon family, who I feared might fall victims of political revenge. Everything worried me.

Monsieur de Flahaut, Monsieur Lavallette and the Duc de Vicence came to see me. They were equally astonished and uneasy about this unexpected event.

Our habit of seeing the Emperor successful on account of his skill and bravery caused us to believe already that he had regained his throne. But what would happen next? If only he did not expect to find the French Empire just as he had left it, if only he would accept more liberal methods of government and renounce dreams of new conquests.

Then too there were times when we doubted the possibility of his return. The thought occurred to me that perhaps Monsieur de La Bedoyère, obeying his mad impulses, had used the Emperor's name to provoke a rising.

In any event I advised these gentlemen not to come and see me again, but to stay at home quietly so that hostile opinion might have no pretext to take steps against them.

My lawsuit was decided, and I lost my case, but I was less distressed by this on account of the great events, which led me to hope I might still keep my son with me in spite of the court's verdict.

The wife of Marshal Ney came to see me and informed me that her husband had received orders to report to his headquarters at Besancon, there to assemble his troops and march against the Emperor.

She was filled with grief and lamented the Emperor's landing. It seemed as though she almost foresaw all the unhappiness that lay before her; although in view of her husband's opinion she could not at the time have supposed that the Emperor would not be the victim of this "mad adventure," as she called it.

Somewhat annoyed by this expression I pointed out to her that perhaps her husband and she were mistaken about the state of opinion in the army and throughout the country, that the malcontents might not be less numerous than those who supported the imperial cause.

As I spoke, I thought of the young officers at Saverne, who, as it happened, would find themselves under the Marshal's orders, and regarding whose conduct I was not for a moment in doubt. She seemed to consider my remarks an indication of my secret hopes.

She reminded me how worried we had been when war was going on and how much I valued our subsequent peace of mind. I interrupted her, saying: "There can be no question in this case of a hope or a wish, but although I am as surprised as you are by the sudden tidings, nevertheless the success of the Emperor seems to me to be a certainty."

She doubtless repeated this conversation to her husband, who, finding out later that I had been right, thought perhaps that I had had something to do with the Emperor's return and that everything had been arranged without his knowing about it.

This is what he assured all those whom he advised to act as he did. Other persons came to me and said with apparent sincerity and in a sympathetic manner

"What a sad end for such a great man. So he has gone crazy. The idea of landing with six hundred men. Perhaps at the very moment he is being tracked down like a wild beast." I smiled at their opinions without feeling called upon to share their pity. Days passed.

The newspapers announced that Colonel de La Bedoyère had gone over to the Emperor at the head of his entire regiment. People knew that he was one of my regular guests. Everybody's eyes were turned on me.

The Duc d'Otrante, whose house was close to mine but whom I never saw and could not like on account of his behavior at the time of my mother's divorce, asked me to receive him. In time of danger it is well to heed everyone's advice and especially that of a man familiar with all the intricacies of politics.

I consequently agreed to receive him immediately. After explaining that he feared to be arrested and asking permission in case of need to be allowed to escape by way of my garden, which was next his house and had an exit on the rue Taitbout, the Duke advised me to take precautions for my own safety.

He assured me that I was as much in peril as he was and that I was supposed to be in touch with Elba. This led us to talk about the general state of France. He declared that he considered the Bourbon

cause hopeless, as their innumerable mistakes would lead to their permanent overthrow and make people receive the Emperor with open arms.

Even if there was a short civil war he would nevertheless win easily, too easily perhaps to allow conditions to be imposed on him, for he could not hope to be Emperor again as he had been in the past.

The Duke said it was extremely important to know what the intentions of the Allied Monarchs were and especially those of the sovereign who had shown the most sympathy toward France.

My brother at Vienna was seeing the Emperor of Russia daily. If Eugene came to Paris immediately, the Duke considered him the person who was the most likely to inspire the confidence of all political parties and whose advice would be the most useful to his country at this particular moment.

The Duke asked me to convey this opinion at once to the Russian chargé d'affaires so that he could communicate it to his master. While waiting what turn events would take, he thought it best to go to some safe refuge. It was to facilitate such an escape that he asked for the key of my garden, which was next to his. I had it given him and I at the same time took the liberty of doing what he asked in regard to the Russian chargé d'affaires.

I did not even stop to think over this conversation. I simply repeated it to Monsieur Boutiaguine, who asked me to make a note of our talk because he might not remember exactly the expressions used by the Duc d'Ortrante. I was merely a

go-between in the matter, but without stopping to think I wrote the note Monsieur Boutiaguine asked for.

Instead of copying it he sent the original to his master. Meanwhile the Emperor had passed through Grenoble and was approaching Lyons. From every side rumor reached me that the royalist party was about to take violent measures.

A prominent police official for whom my brother had formerly done a favor sent word to me that at a meeting of the King's private council a list of persons to be arrested had been drawn up. My name figured on that list. Plans were being made, so I was told, to provoke a popular insurrection against the Emperor, and the Chouans had concentrated in Paris and received money to stir up trouble.

They were to seize several private mansions including that of the Duc de Rovigo. My house was next door.

Consequently, I was advised to leave home. Monsieur Alexandre de Girardin, a lieutenant-general attached to the Duc de Berry, who managed to reconcile his official duties and his personal friendship for me, called to inform me, both on my behalf and on that of the family he served, of the serious accusations which were being made against me.

It was openly said at court that I had pawned my diamonds and was distributing the funds thus obtained to win over the troops to the Imperial cause. On the contrary, instead of conspiring to provoke

a change of dynasty I had no inclination to do anything of the kind, since my natural scruples would have prevented me from performing any hostile action toward a government to whom I was indebted for having been allowed to stay in France.

Even if there had been no such moral obligation I, with my ideas regarding personal responsibility, should not have felt justified in using my influence to provoke events whose consequences I was unable to foresee. Therefore, I could not believe I was in danger.

Nevertheless, when Monsieur Boutiaguine convinced me that I was looked on as Emperor Napoleon's agent in Paris, that I was no longer safe there, and when all those about me also urged me to escape, I finally made up my mind to leave home.

I did so one morning [March 11, 1815]. I wore a hat and coat belonging to Mademoiselle Cochelet, and the better to make it appear that I was she, I took the arm of her brother instead of that of Monsieur Devaux, an elderly man who acted as my equerry.

At the door and as we turned the corner of the rue Cerutti I put my head down to escape the glances of the police spies who were already stationed there. They looked at me curiously but made no attempt to follow us. I should have been extremely nervous. Not at all. The embarrassment of finding myself for the first time in my life walking about the streets alone with a man was more on my mind than any thought of danger.

Fortunately, it was raining, and our umbrella still further helped conceal my face. My guide was no less alarmed than I. He was particularly nervous on account of my dress trimmed with lace, which I had not had the time to change and which the coat did not completely conceal.

He was worried every step of the way, which seemed to me a long one, for fear of my being recognized. Finally, I reached the rue Duphot at the corner of the boulevard.

Without anyone catching sight of me I slipped up to the third floor and sought refuge with Madame Lefebvre, an old servant of my brother, who had accompanied my mother when she came from Martinique.

She eloquently expressed her joy at seeing me and at being able to be useful to me. In her apartment I suddenly found myself back again in a familiar setting, surrounded by family portraits and a quantity of little objects which had belonged to my brother and me when we were children and which Madame Lefebvre had preciously treasured ever since.

Her husband placed his room at my disposal. Having thus taken refuge in a profound isolation and being able to reflect at length on what was happening, I discovered I was chiefly annoyed by the role which malicious gossip was attributing to me.

People said that I went about among the troops, visiting the barracks and distributing money to the soldiers. This seemed so little like me that I decided to write to Monsieur d'Andre, chief of police, in order to refute these absurd rumors, of whose falseness he must be better aware than anyone else.

I added that no matter what the future might hold in store for me or for my children my character was such that I could never play any active part in public life, but could only passively submit to the course of events.

This letter was shown to the King. But as fear makes us suspicious and as the progress of the Emperor became constantly more and more swift, hostility toward me steadily increased. Meanwhile every morning the newspapers informed me that the decisive moment was approaching.

All eyes were fixed on the military leaders. Four thousand men had entered Soissons crying, "Long live the Emperor!" I heard later that for several months all sorts of conspiracies had been afoot. Even in the army officers were becoming discontented with the marshals and the new leaders.

Generals Lallemand and Lefebvre-Desnoettes had prepared a revolt quite independent of the Emperor's return. If he had not disembarked at Cannes when he did, the Bourbons would have been overthrown even without his arrival.

The landing of the Emperor merely turned popular feeling in a new direction. For instance, when he heard of it General Lefebvre-Desnoettes set out to join him at the head of his troops, declaring he was leading back the Old Guard to its former commander.

The two generals Lallemand [who were brothers] had also prepared to march on Paris and were only stopped a short distance from the capital by Colonel de Talhouet. The latter refused to order his regiment to take up arms against the King, and his action upset the plans of the leaders of the undertaking.

The Lallemand brothers were captured and General Lefebvre-Desnoettes managed to hide. This slight success encouraged the royalist party. A camp was formed at Melun, commanded by Monsieur le Duc de Berry. A royalist volunteer corps was organized, and men of all ages came to enlist.

From my window I could watch the boulevard and the sight was a curious one. Sometimes groups of volunteers marched past, the volunteers consisting of young enthusiasts and old supporters of the royal cause, the former arrogant and proud, the latter already dragging along under the weight of the equipment.

Both were equally inexperienced, both equally full of ardor and both shouting, "Long live the King!"

They would be followed by a cavalry regiment of the old army, whose horsemen sat motionless amid the turmoil, unmoved by the demonstrations in which the crowd sought to make them share.

They seemed to disdain these empty cheers, preoccupied by the thought of the man against whom they were about to fight rather than by that of the one whose cause they were to defend.

Meanwhile the crowd, as if it were at a play, waited eagerly for the outcome of all these events, but was well aware that it would shortly be acclaiming whichever of the two adversaries was victorious.

It happened that the apartment next to mine was occupied by one of the heads of the Chouans. All day unprepossessing looking men came to see him and seemed to be receiving money and taking orders.

An old woman who was in her room heard what they said and assured Madame Lefebvre that they were all connected with the police spy-service and that she had heard money and weapons being distributed.

This of course increased Madame Lefebvre's fears for my safety. She begged me not to show myself at the window, because opposite there lived a painter who held extremely royalist ideas, and upstairs was the family of a member of the King's bodyguard. Certain anonymous letters sent me to my home announced that two hundred Chouans were going to meet the Emperor disguised as deserting troops and that they were planning to murder him. I trembled; but how was I to warn him?

Monsieur Devaux came one evening to give me news of what was happening to my friends. All those who were known to be Bonapartists had already gone into hiding. The Duc de Vicence had sought refuge with an old cook, Monsieur de Flahaut at the house of Monsieur Alexandre de Girardin and Monsieur Lavallette in my house.

Surprised at the spot the latter had chosen as a hiding-place I was told that it had seemed a particularly safe spot since I had left. Moreover, he was taking all sorts of precautionary measures such as arranging a secret cupboard in the attic and wearing the wig of my steward by way of disguise.

This sometimes resulted in rather amusing scenes, which lightened the atmosphere of my home while I was away. The Duc d'Ortrante, who was arrested, as he had expected, found an excuse to slip away from the police officers when they had already taken him into custody.

By means of a ladder he climbed the wall into my garden. Having in his nervousness forgotten the key of the little gate, he broke the lock with a stone and left the door open. The police were so surprised not to find any trace of him in his own house, in spite of their search, that it was rumored there were secret passages between it and mine.

The Duc d'Ortrante has since told me that the night before he had come to ask me to facilitate his escape and talk about my brother, he had had a long talk with the Comte d'Artois.

The latter had begged him on behalf of the King to assume the post of chief of police with unlimited powers, but the Duke refused, saying it was too late, that it was no longer possible to save their dynasty.

This refusal was doubtless, as he suspected, the reason for his arrest. I wrote Madame Du Cayla to find out what was happening to Monsieur Sosthenes de La Rochefoucauld, who was liable to expose himself unduly on account of his great admiration for the royalist cause.

He was at Bordeaux with the Duchesse d'Angoulême, who displayed a strength of character worthy of her rank. One evening I was told that a mail-carrier, the father-in-law of Vincent Rousseau, my valet de chambre, had just arrived from Lyons where he had witnessed the Emperor's entry into the city.

An immense throng intoxicated with the joy of again catching sight of him had cheered him loudly. King Louis XVIII sent for this messenger and inquired if he had seen Bonaparte. The messenger replied quite frankly that he had seen him at Lyons surrounded by a crowd of people who kissed his uniform and whose enthusiasm was boundless.

He added, "I must say, Sire, that your nobility were far from brave. I saw your brother come back with two gendarmes. Everybody else had abandoned him."

The courtiers hastened to silence him, while the King, quite overcome, hid his face in his hands. The messenger having been dismissed, the chief of police sent for him and forbade him to tell what he had seen at Lyons or even to leave his home. But the messenger told everything to his daughter, who came to impart it to her husband.

Monsieur Lavallette forbade Vincent Rousseau to go to see his father-in-law, fearing that he and my other servants might be suspected if it was discovered they were in touch with a government dispatch-bearer.

During the few days I had spent in the house things began to seem very tedious to me, and in spite of my old servant's warnings I could not resist standing by the window to breathe a little fresh air.

On the morning of March 20, I caught sight of the youthful members of the King's body-guard, who had looked so fiery a short time before, looking downcast as they bade sad farewells to the members of their grief-stricken family. The painter who lived across the street appeared at his window with very preoccupied air.

The huge white ribbon [white being the color of the Bourbons] with which he adorned his buttonhole had disappeared. Armed with a feather-duster he was busy removing the dust from a life-size portrait of one of the Emperor's ministers.

I thought I recognized the likeness as that of Monsieur de Montalivet. The painter's wife, thin and nervous, appeared to be arguing with him vigorously, in a state of great excitement. All these changes made me feel that still others had occurred elsewhere in the capital.

I was impatient to hear the news when Monsieur Devaux arrived and told me that the King had left hastily during the night upon hearing that Marshal Ney and his army corps had gone over to the Emperor.

Monsieur Devaux had heard of this departure from one of the men who cleaned the floors of his house this man was the uncle of a dancer at the Opera [named Virginie], the mistress of the Duc de Berry. During the night of March 19, the prince had come to say good-by because the young dancer had just had a child.

He told her in the presence of her family, whom he urged to take good care of her, "We must separate forever. We have lost everything, no hope remains." I wished to return home immediately, but Monsieur Devaux pointed out that hordes of people without any clearly defined means of livelihood were pouring into Paris, and might the more easily commit excesses of all kinds since the Bourbons had left the capital without any commander or anyone in authority to keep order.

Does it seem possible? In spite of the various emotions which had preyed upon me during the last few days I still was sentimental enough to care about what became of this family who were thus, after a brief return home, once more driven into exile. They must be suffering all those painful sensations which I had a short time before experienced myself, and this idea caused me to feel a sincere sympathy for them.

The Orleans family were those for whom I felt the most sorry. Without knowing any of them personally, their affable behavior, their highly respectable domestic life had charmed those who had come in contact with them, and the sentiment had communicated itself to me.

I recalled that the Duke had received my brother kindly, and in this critical moment when it was possible that the masses might commit some act of violence against them I who had nothing to fear from the mob, would have been glad to be useful to them if the opportunity had presented itself. A few days before, prompted by this feeling, I had sent word to one of my maids, who had been also employed by Mademoiselle d'Orleans [the sister of Louis-Philippe], placing my services at their disposal.

Should they feel that either they themselves or any of their children were in danger I urged them to trust me implicitly. My maid Madame Charles went to deliver my message and came back saying she had not ventured to do so. "Alas," she added, "how could I utter your name when Mademoiselle d'Orleans on catching sight of me exclaimed, 'We are obliged to leave again and it is that Duchesse de Saint-Leu who has caused our ruin' ?"

In a moment that was such a critical one for the King, I remembered only the friendly manner in which he had received me, and I thought that at a time when everyone was deserting him it would be agreeable to him to hear I still recalled his kindness toward me.

I wrote him and repeated the expression of my thanks, giving the letter to Monsieur de Lascours, an officer of his body-guard who was to join him abroad. Monsieur Devaux came back at three o'clock and said that in all probability the Emperor would enter Paris that same day.

He had with him a letter which the Duc d'Ortrante wished me to forward to the Emperor, it being important, so he said, that the Emperor receive it before entering the city. I believe it was to warn the Emperor to be on his guard against the Chouans in disguise who were planning to assassinate him.

My valet de chambre Rousseau left at once with it. Nothing surprised me so much on my way home as to see along the boulevards how all the shopkeepers were busy changing or turning around their signs. The eagles and the bees were taking the place of the lilies and fortunately this change was the only indication of the great events that had taken place. Perhaps the most amazing, miraculous and unheard-of thing of all was the Emperor's march from Cannes to Paris.

When he came up to the outpost of the first regiment which had been dispatched from Grenoble to attack him the Emperor dismounted, stepped forward alone and said to the nearest soldier, "Do you recognize me? Would you dare fire at your general?"

Cries of "Long live the Emperor!" were the reply and this body of troops joined his force. A short time later Colonel de La Bedoyère brought over his regiment and opened the gates of Grenoble.

From then on as far as Paris the Emperor traveled in a little carriage almost without any escort. As soon as he caught sight of a regiment marching toward him, he would quietly get out, walk forward to meet it, and review it as he had done in the past.

This confidence in the troops conquered them immediately. At first they were astonished; then they became enthusiastic and gave way to their emotion until it seemed to him and to other observers that he had never ceased to be the Emperor of the French.

My valet de chambre met the Emperor near Essonnes, just as he was changing horses, and found the escort so small that he could not realize that this was he.

Having delivered the letter he returned to report that so many country folk were hurrying up from all sides to see the Emperor pass and so many Parisians were going out to meet him that he had been obliged to come back at a snail's pace.

Everywhere the enthusiasm was intense. The troops who had concentrated at the camp at Melun and who had taken their places along the Essonnes road shouted, "Long live the Emperor!" as soon as they caught sight of him, and certain generals who till then had been rather undecided allowed themselves to be carried away by the impetus of the crowd in spite of the opinions they had held the day before.

They have since declared, "The princes were not there what could we do?" The Emperor's former aides-de-camp as well as the Duc de Vicence had left the morning of March 20 to meet him and had joined him at Essonnes.

He embraced them all and had the Duc de Vicence step into his carriage where there already were General Drouot and General Bertrand. An officer of the National Guard came at seven o'clock in the evening to invite me to go to the Tuileries to await the arrival of the Emperor.

The officer was sent by the former cabinet ministers. Crowds surrounded the palace. The sight of my carriage caused much cheering. The sentries belonging to the National Guard were turned out and they saluted as I arrived.

They cheered so loudly that I thought it must be the Emperor who was approaching. When I discovered that the demonstration was in my honor I could not help smiling, for I remembered that a few days before I had passed this same spot quite unrecognized by the men on duty.

How quickly things change! I found many officers and ladies assembled in the apartments of the former cabinet ministers. Among the ladies were the Duchesse de Bassano, Duchesse de Frioul, Duchesse Duchesse de Rovigo, Madame Gazzani and Madame Lallemand.

Queen Julie [wife of Napoleon's brother Joseph, King of Spain], who happened to be in Paris seeking to regain possession of her estate of Mortefontaine, which had been sequestered, arrived a moment after I did.

The renewed cheering that greeted her made us again imagine it was the Emperor. Night had fallen. The crowd withdrew. People did not believe he would arrive till the next day. Had he postponed his entry till then his reception would have been a real triumph, but he never on any occasion made a formal state entry into Paris.

He always returned to his palace after dark. It was not till the next morning that his arrival was announced. Perhaps in this particular instance he wished to return on March 20th, the anniversary of his son's birth.

The royalists declared it was fear of the attitude of the Parisians which delayed him, and that he did not arrive till after dark intentionally. Finally, at nine o'clock he drove up into the court of the Tuileries, just twenty days after he had landed on, French soil.

He had not encountered the least resistance anywhere and had only stopped long enough to change horses and review the different troops. His carriage stopped at the entrance to his ordinary apartments.

We went to meet him, and for a few moments he was in actual danger so great was the eagerness with which people pressed forward, seized by an intoxication which it is difficult to explain.

We could scarcely manage to withdraw from the crowd in order to avoid being suffocated ourselves. As we did so we saw him caught up by a thousand arms and carried in triumphantly to his own apartments. When he arrived, there were only two of his former aides-de-camp beside his carriage.

The others reached Paris later. When the first movement of joy and enthusiasm had passed, my friends managed to make a path for me through the crowd, and I was able to enter his drawing-room with the other ladies. I stepped forward to embrace him accompanied by Queen Julie. He received me rather coldly and asked my sister-in-law, "How does it happen you are here?"

I noticed he embraced all the other ladies more warmly than he did us. He greeted all the men in a most cordial manner, especially Prince of Eckmühl [General Davout, with whom Napoleon had won the battle of Eckmühl in 1809].

Madame Lallemand asked for and obtained immediately the release of her husband, who had been sentenced to death on account of having headed a mutiny.

The Emperor asked her various questions about this incident which he had heard about only vaguely in the recent newspapers. It was announced that supper was ready and he went in, passing us without a word.

Queen Julie and I were alone in the drawing-room speaking of the cold reception which we had received when I heard a noise in the Emperor's study. I went to see what it was. To my extreme surprise I discovered there the young accountant Fleury de Chaboulon who had left a few months before to go to Elba.

He told me he had arrived at the Tuileries just after the Emperor to whose cabinet he was attached. It seemed that an illness had prevented his reaching Elba before the end of February.

On his arrival the Emperor had asked a great many questions regarding conditions in France and he was quite sure it was his account that had made the Emperor decide to land so quickly although the Emperor had never said a word to this effect.

On the contrary, having returned by way of Italy to do certain things for the Emperor, he was amazed on arriving at Lyons to find his master there.

The latter had allowed him to come to Paris in one of his carriages. Thus no one in France could have received word of this return for the only man who went to Elba arrived in France after the Emperor did.

I asked Monsieur Fleury de Chaboulon if the Emperor had spoken about me and what he had said. His reply was that he had scarcely mentioned me as the Emperor had appeared so indignant at my having remained in France that he had not dared deliver my message to him.

I returned to the drawing-room. The Emperor came in a few minutes later and stepped up to me. "Where are your children?" he said.

"Sire, existing conditions obliged me to send them away from home. I ask your permission to bring them to you tomorrow."

"I see by the papers," he went on, "that you lost your case. I was sure you would. Everything depends on paternal authority."

Then he went into his study where he received all his ministers one after another. This took so long that we decided to withdraw, although we had not yet made our farewells.

The Duc de Vicence, as we went out, told me he had taken my part, that people had tried to do me much harm at Elba by false reports about me and that the Emperor, greatly annoyed, did not wish to receive me at all.

The Duke told me that he himself had done everything he could to modify this attitude. He advised me to come the next day with my children. I did so and arrived very early. An enormous crowd already filled the garden.

Officers of all branches of the service and every rank crowded about the courtyards and the stairways. Never had I seen such enthusiasm. People are always willing to applaud anything that arouses their astonishment, but this event had something superhuman about it which stirred even the least interested observer.

Such was the prestige which everyone felt obliged to accord the man who had shown himself so far above ordinary beings by his personal character and by his career.

My heart beat violently when I entered the Emperor's drawing-room. He was alone near the open window, returning the acclamations of the people which filled the air.

He received me coldly, embraced my children, inquired with interest about their health, after which we walked about for a few minutes without saying anything while my children watched the crowds that thronged the gardens. Every time we approached the window the cheers increased. In vain I sought to remain in the background I was so conspicuous that the next day the newspapers stated that the Emperor had called the crowd's attention to me and my children, an account which was altogether inaccurate as, on the contrary, he still seemed angry with me.

Finally, he broke the silence and said, "I would never have thought you would forsake my cause."

"Forsake your cause, Sire? Would I, or even could I have done such a thing?"

"You had no right to dispose of the future of my nephews without my permission. Your husband was right to be distressed by such behavior."

"Sire, you do not know the reasons which made me remain in France. My mother wished me to do so. I was all she had left. My husband as you know offered me no support. His advice could not inspire me with any confidence. Where was I to go?"

"With your brother."

"But he had no situation of his own as yet. He had gone to ask for one at Vienna."

"You could have gone and demanded one also."

"Do you think I should have been allowed to do so? The Emperor of Russia proved a generous foe. He wished to assure my children's future. Could I possibly have refused him? Did anyone decline the Duchy of Parma which was offered your son?"

"That was quite different. That insured his independence."

"Your son, Sire, had lost more than mine. He had lost the throne of France. People considered he was fortunate in securing even so small a compensation as the Duchy of Parma.

Should I have refused for my sons, who were only princes, a compensation, which doubtless was still less important in itself, but nevertheless was more so in proportion to their position?"

"What does that matter? You had no business to stay in France. A piece of bread by the roadside would have been preferable. Moreover, don't imagine that your children would have been benefited by these so-called gifts.

They would have been got rid of. You behaved like a child yourself. When one has shared a family's rise in rank one must share its misfortunes."

On receiving this reproof, which I so little deserved but which my having remained in France seemed partly to justify, I could not restrain my tears. "Ah, Sire, how greatly I have been mistaken! I thought I was doing my duty in keeping your nephews from going into a foreign country. I could not write you. I vainly attempted to do so. I hoped you would be pleased that at any rate they remained on French soil in the midst of their countrymen. Where were there any friends to whose care I could have confided them?"

Touched by my grief, the Emperor said to me in a milder tone: "Now then, now then, you have not a single good excuse to make, but you know I am a good father and shall forgive you willingly. Let us not speak of it any more. Besides, I know how well you behaved while living in France."

I wished to go into details regarding my lawsuit and explain that I had been obliged to defend my case but he said, "Oh, about that matter, you are a mother! That explains everything."

Admiral Ver Huell was announced. The Emperor advanced to meet him and said with emotion: "Come here, Admiral, let me embrace you. I am delighted to see a hero again. If everyone had behaved as you did all those misfortunes would not have taken place."

The Admiral, deeply moved, could not reply. Both men had tears in their eyes. I was delighted to see such well-deserved praise being given to one of my friends.

Monsieur le Comte de Mole was admitted. He came to thank the Emperor for his kindness but requested he only be appointed head of the Department of Roads and Bridges, not feeling qualified to accept the cabinet post the Emperor had offered him. When alone with me the Emperor inquired, "Has Mole changed toward me?"

"I do not think so. He continued to come and see me although less frequently." The reason I wonder about it," continued the Emperor, "is that I wished to make him Minister of Foreign Affairs, and he declined the post."

"Do you mean, Sire, that you were not going to appoint the Duc de Vicence?

Everyone is aware how much he has always done to prevent hostilities, and France needs peace so much."

"He is too fond of foreigners."

"But, Sire, you must convince foreigners that you wish for peace. His nomination would be a guarantee of your intentions."

"So that is how it is, you are playing politics nowadays." Saying this, he pinched my ear. He went on to speak of my mother, of her death and of the grief it had caused him.

"I certainly intend to have her brought to Saint Denis, but quietly and not just yet. There have been so many of those mournful ceremonies that the nation must be tired of them. Is your brother in Vienna? I hope he is still devoted to France. I am counting on him absolutely. I wrote him from Lyons. The allied kings would have done nothing for him. He should be in France."

I assured the Emperor of my brother's loyalty. He dismissed me, saying that whenever I wished to see him, he would always receive me after his dinner in the evening.

Having said this, he went down the main stairway in order to review the troops massed in the Carrousel. My children insisted so on seeing the parade that I agreed.

Going through the private apartments I met the Duc de Vicence, who told me the Emperor had proposed to him the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs but he had refused and recommended Monsieur Mole. I pointed out to him all the consequences of this refusal. "People know that you are the only man who has constantly advised the Emperor to make peace. Your advice is now more necessary than it has

ever been before. You must intervene and bring all your influence to bear against his plans for new conquests."

"I entirely agree with you, Madame. But what can I do if the Emperor has not changed and if he begins by wanting to reconquer Belgium?"

"My God!" I exclaimed.

"Has he already begun to speak about that?"

"No, but what alarms me is that he should have been received so enthusiastically. A little resistance would have proved more valuable. How can you expect a man not to believe that he can accomplish everything, and even to attempt it after he has met with such a welcome? Then, too, will the foreign powers be willing to discuss terms of peace? That is the great problem."

"Remember," I said, "our conversations with the Emperor of Russia, how anxious he was to put an end to all this bloodshed and never to oppose the wishes of the French people. I have no doubt he will understand just as we do that this return is in accordance with the wishes of the immense majority of the French, and consequently he will not seek to oppose our national aspirations. To do so, would be entirely contrary to his principles and the magnanimous attitude he displayed. Thus it is the patriotic pride of Emperor Napoleon that most alarms me at present. May all those about him do their best to make him realize the necessity of peace."

"That is doubtless true," replied the Duc de Vicence. "But does it depend only on him? Is Emperor Alexander entirely free from passions of his own?"

I have attended many solemn military displays but never one that equaled the spectacle presented by this first review. The great Place du Carrousel, all the neighboring streets, the houses, the roofs, the scaffoldings were covered with an innumerable throng. Their frantic cheers were echoed by the cries of "Long live the Emperor!" which the soldiers of all regiments, officers of all

branches of the service uttered, as they waved their helmets and caps at the ends of their muskets and swords.

I remembered having seen the crowds at the height of the Empire, carried away with joy. On this occasion they were simply mad. Only the battalion from Elba remained calm and silent. With a noble pride it seemed to accept its share in the popular rejoicings. The martial faces of these grenadiers, browned by the southern sun, their clothes still covered with dust, distinguished them from all the rest. They had arrived at three o'clock in the morning in the courtyard of the Carrousel and they had bivouacked there with a party of the 7th Regiment commanded by Monsieur de La Bedoyère.

They had marched thirty-five miles in order to catch up with the Emperor, having heard rumors of the disguised Chouans who were to have attacked him.

When I came home at five o'clock, I found General de Girardin there. He told me he had gone to the camp of Melun decided to do his duty in favor of the Bourbons, but that the place had been in the greatest confusion with no one to take command, and all the troops had followed the general movement and gone over to the Emperor.

Colonel de La Bedoyère arrived just as I was going in to dinner. I asked him to stay and dine with me and at the same time relate all the circumstances of his surrender to the Emperor.

He told me that when he rejoined his regiment, he had not the slightest idea that the Emperor was about to land, that he could not explain the return except as being due to the Emperor's desire to free his country from the state of humiliation into which it had fallen.

He himself as soon as he heard the news believed that his country could be saved, and he had left Chambery with the firm intention of helping the Emperor's enterprise as soon as he could do so. On arriving at Grenoble Monsieur de La Bedoyère, in spite of the orders issued by his general to disperse his regiment in different parts of the town, massed it in the central square and having harangued it, being sure his troops would follow him, he led them out to meet the Emperor.

He encountered him about nine miles from Grenoble. The Emperor came toward him, embraced him and handed him the insignia which he had on his own hat. They discussed at length the situation in France.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère took advantage of this opportunity to say, "Sire, your only hope of continuing to govern France is to adopt liberal ideas."

"Do you think I am afraid of such ideas?" replied the Emperor.

"After a revolution such as it has experienced France, with all the political passions still at boiling-point and all class-interests on edge, needs a firm hand to govern her. I, and I alone, can give the people that liberty to which they are justly entitled. Everything that has taken place this last year has shown me what their true wishes and desires are. The hopes they place in me shall not be disappointed."

Having said this, Monsieur de La Bedoyère added emphatically : "Ah, madame, if France is to regain her independence, if the Emperor will provide her with a liberal constitution, if personal liberty is assured and the national laws are properly enforced, I shall be satisfied, because I shall feel that I have contributed something to my country's salvation."

Everything about him indicated a strong and loyal character. When the Emperor wished to make him general after he had rallied to the imperial cause, and when General Drouot was sent to announce this appointment to him he replied "Tell the Emperor that I am not seeking any reward. If I accept anything people will say I have been acting from motives of personal ambition. Such a sentiment is beneath me."

In fact, he told me several times that he intended to resign from the army and that if he remained in active service it was simply because he was anxious to do his share in defending his country, along with all other Frenchmen. If it had not been for this, he would even have refused to be the Emperor's aide-de-camp, for he detested the etiquette of the court.

During peace-times the only thing he was interested in was his home-life and he tried to make his wife forgive him for the part he had played in the recent events.

She had withdrawn to the country with her mother, Madame de Chastellux, and refused to see her husband again, because he had forsaken everything for a cause which she refused to accept.

As a matter of fact, both their families were devoted to the Bourbons. Madame de La Bedoyère had just recovered the large estates which had previously belonged to them.

Consequently no one lost more than her husband by the Emperor's return, but the more completely he had overlooked this the prouder he was to have done so. Who could help admiring such a character?

After dinner I returned to the Tuileries. The Duc de Vicence had accepted the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Duc d'Otrante had been made chief of police.

The Duc de Bassano was still particularly popular with the Emperor, who had dined alone with him. There were a number of people in the drawing-room when I entered. Several ladies arrived later.

The Emperor chatted informally with everyone. He gave some details in regard to his life on Elba. He mentioned what a consolation it had been for him to have his mother and his sister Pauline there and how much he had enjoyed the quietness of the island.

He conducted his household economically, but it cost him a good deal to keep up his guard, and he had begun to fear that he would have to dismiss it, although several Genoese had often offered to loan him money, fearing he might need some. Someone asked what had given him the idea of returning to France. He replied: "It was the newspapers. For a long time, I did not receive any, and then twenty or more came all at once. I saw that attempts were being made to slander the army and to speak contemptuously of its former successes, while promotions and honors were being handed out to men who had never been under fire. Then too the purchasers of public property were being annoyed, and the important influence the priests were exercising must have made people fear the return of the tithing system. I was sure that if I managed to land in France I should be hailed as a liberator. I was convinced that those who had so long been obliged to undergo hard-ships would employ all possible means to revive former customs and to undo the work the Revolution had accomplished, but I admit I did not think they would set to work so quickly. I thought Louis XVIII cleverer than he turned out to be. The masses seem very incensed against the poor priests," he added, "for everywhere the peasants, when they come to cheer my carriage, cry also 'A bas les calotins!' ['Down with the church party.']")

The Duc de Bassano replied that in many districts and families the priests had sought to establish a kind of inquisition in regard to personal opinions, the country folk had been alarmed at the return of the tithing system and, moreover, so many gloomy ceremonies had depressed everyone. It was already late.

The Emperor retired, and I too went home in great need of some rest. Just as I was going to bed word came that my brother's steward was sending him a special messenger to Vienna to inform him of the events that had taken place and I was asked if I had any special messages for him.

I hastily scribbled a few lines. I mentioned the Emperor's rather cold reception of me, the general enthusiasm, and expressed the hope of seeing my brother again shortly. I had very little to say about political matters as I believed he would come back with the Empress and the King of Rome. In my letter I did not forget to refer to my earnest hope for peace, which formed the most important object of my thoughts.

I had so much enjoyed this year of mental repose that no other form of happiness seemed to me comparable with that freedom from all anxieties. I urged my brother not to neglect any means of persuading the Emperor Alexander to sacrifice his personal animosity for fear of causing a war which to judge by the enthusiasm of the French nation would be sanguinary and long drawn out.

CHAPTER XV

THE HUNDRED DAYS (MARCH 22-JUNE 10, 1815)

Letter from Marie Louise—At Court—How Hortense Helped Napoleon—Public Opinion—Luncheon at Malmaison—Madame Bertrand—Anecdotes About Elba—Napoleon's Mother—Rumors of a Divorce Between Louis Bonaparte and Hortense—Preparing for War—The Champ-de-Mars.

THE following morning [March 22, 1815] the Duc de Vicence called. He asked me to write Empress Marie Louise on behalf of the Emperor who wished me to describe in detail his return and the welcome he had received, and to say how glad he would be to see her again.

I hastened to do as the Emperor requested. I so wrongly judged what the attitude of the Foreign Powers would be toward the Emperor that I told the messenger to proceed directly to Vienna and deliver my letter to the Empress.

I felt sure that on the way he would meet my brother returning to Paris. How grievously I was mistaken! My letters were seized, opened and criticized.

People reading between the lines discovered traces of diplomatic maneuvers and dangerous insinuations.

This interpretation nearly did my brother serious injury as there was talk of imprisoning him in the Austrian citadel. He retained his liberty thanks only to the intervention of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Bavaria and after he had given his word to remain neutral.

When sometime afterwards the Emperor informed me that my messenger had been captured, I seemed so surprised that he said to me, "What in the world did you put in your letter?"

"Only what was taking place, Sire,"

I replied, "but I am the more annoyed because I spoke of family matters.

I admit I am still childish enough not to be willing to believe people can take a letter and open it when it is addressed to someone else."

The Emperor laughed. The same day I sent off my messenger, the Russian envoy Monsieur Boutiaguine sent to ask if I had any messages to deliver abroad. He like the other foreign envoys had been for a moment afraid they would be held as prisoners.

The King had informed them that he was going to remain and then left so hurriedly that none of them had received word of his departure. The Emperor provided passports for all of them.

The Duc de Vicence made a present to Monsieur Boutiaguine of the treaty found in the papers of Louis XVIII, according to which England, France and Austria were to form a coalition against Russia and Prussia.

Monsieur Boutiaguine told me that he doubted if his master would even consent to recognize Emperor Napoleon, because one could not have confidence in his promises. I spoke to him about the Emperor's unexpected return, which, as he was well aware, was not the result of any carefully laid plan, and said to him

"You have seen for yourself the popular enthusiasm. The wishes of the country are clearly evident. If Emperor Napoleon wishes to make war, he will speedily lose the support of the French nation because everyone wants peace. He is too wise and far-seeing not to accept the verdict of an entire nation.

Thus, if war does break out it will be because of the Emperor of Russia's attitude, and I dislike the thought that he could ever be responsible for such a misfortune."

Monsieur Boutiaguine was leaving for Vienna, and I gave him a letter for the Emperor of Russia expressing my hopes for peace. The Emperor worked constantly. He spent part of the mornings reviewing the troops that kept arriving from all over France. He generally dined alone at nine o'clock, but after his return he formed the habit of inviting a few guests. All the generals and their wives dined with him in succession. I would come in about half past nine and go into the dining-room, although they were still at table.

The Emperor was told certain curious particulars about the way in which the King and the princes lived. They were very anxious to revive old customs which had fallen into disuse, among others that of having religious processions go through the streets on Sundays and other feast days.

The Emperor's comment was that the French would never become accustomed to such old-fashioned traditions. General Albert described one day how the Duc d'Orleans on leaving for Lille saw people putting on the tricolor cockade and exclaimed, "How happy I should be if I too could wear that emblem."

"Ah, if he had been king," replied Emperor Napoleon, "I might never have come back, for he would not have made so many mistakes."

Another time, when he had opened a letter from the Duchesse d'Angoulême to the King, who she believed was still in Paris, in which she made certain suggestions and described what she was doing to keep Bordeaux loyal to the royal cause, the Emperor said, "She is the only man in the family."

He expressed his surprise that a woman who deserved so much sympathy on account of her misfortunes had not more thoroughly won the hearts of the French.

He was told that she was vindictive. I noticed that the persons who formerly had been most assiduous in their attention to the King and the princes were the first afterwards to make fun of them, just as those who apparently had been the most devoted to Emperor Napoleon had, when he left for Elba, been those who applied the most insulting epithets to him.

This sad insight into human nature taught me to judge it severely, but it also saddened me and made me regret my solitude. Life at court during this period was a curious one.

Watching it one was able to surmise how much confidence rulers should place in the affection and loyalty of their subjects. A large number of the most devout royalists, believing the cause of the King to be irretrievably lost, already sought to be forgiven and to explain their previous attitude by expressing their violent admiration for the Emperor.

Around him hovered constantly members of both legislative bodies, the chamberlains, the equerries, generals and judges, including those who had most severely condemned him in the past.

They eagerly sought his favors and proclaimed how fortunate France was still to possess him to guide her destinies. He, in his wisdom, seemed entirely ignorant of everything that had been said and done against him. He never uttered a reproach.

"There are circumstances so far above human fore-sight," he declared, "that it is impossible to lay down any hard and fast line of conduct. One of the most important qualities in a monarch should be his ability to be indulgent. I am prepared to forgive all those who only betrayed me."

Consequently, he received all the women except those who had deserted the Empress and all the men except those who had been false to France. The only fault the liberals could find with him was that he banished the traitors and sequestered all their property.

He also took too harsh steps against members of the King's household, which, although they were not carried out, nevertheless sowed the seed for future hostility.

It might have been more advisable for him to allow the former dukes and peers to remain members of the upper Chamber, for they would not have been unwilling to rally to his support. But he had become accustomed to think of them as his enemies and, convinced they would always remain so, he surrounded himself almost entirely with liberals and even sought to win over the republicans.

These two classes formed the most numerous and the most energetic political group and the one most capable of executing his plans since their interests coincided with his.

Already circumstances made my life again a troubled one. I did not have a moment to myself. Other people claimed every instant of my time.

The Duchesse d'Orleans and the Duchesse de Bourbon were the first to whose interests I had to attend. I also took pleasure in thus revenging myself by kindness for the way in which the royalists had behaved toward me.

The Emperor allowed Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans an income of 400,000 francs besides the sum of 1,800,000 francs due her for the timber she had cut in the former state forests, which she had taken over again during the Restoration.

The Duchesse de Bourbon received an income of 250,000 francs. The day after his arrival the Emperor dispatched one of his aides-de-camp to assure them, they would be safe.

I also sent Baron Devaux. Madame de Vitrolles asked me for a private audience, which request I granted. She came with her daughter to implore me to ask the Emperor to release her husband. He had been arrested at Toulouse and brought to Paris.

In 1814, before the Emperor's abdication he had gone over to the cause of the Comte d'Artois although still in the service of the Emperor. Madame de Vitrolles told me that she had just come from Ghent and felt justified in saying that the crown jewels would be sent back if her husband were released.

I replied that out of gratitude to the King I should be pleased to do anything I could for those who had served him and needed assistance, and I promised to act as she wished. I did indeed speak of the matter to the Emperor that same evening. He answered me in an abrupt manner saying, "What does he dare to expect? Not to be taken and shot?"

Instead of alarming Madame de Vitrolles by repeating this remark I merely told her that the Emperor was not yet favorably disposed toward her husband, that she must take no further action and I would let her know as soon as I believed I could be more successful. She pointed out to me that her husband had been in charge of publishing the *Moniteur* [the official newspaper] and that not a derogatory word about me had ever been printed in it.

I requested the chief of police to show special consideration toward her husband. Madame de Vitrolles came to see me several times. She overwhelmed me with compliments and exaggerated expressions of her gratitude. These later changed considerably.

Two months afterwards in this same *Moniteur* I was mentioned along with Madame Hamelin, a very clever woman but not a person I received at my house, as having plotted the return of Emperor Napoleon, and when the writer went on to say I was the cause of all the misfortunes that had befallen France I knew exactly who was responsible for this attack.

Madame Du Cayla sometimes came to see me in the morning. She confided to me her regret that the Bourbons had been forced to leave and her hope that they would return. She did not conceal from me the fact that she was in touch with the court at Ghent.

Far from taking advantage of her confidence I was flattered that she had a sufficiently good opinion of my character to believe I would not be indiscreet in spite of my situation at court.

Moreover, her hopes were not plots. I took advantage of the fact that she was writing to Ghent to offer my services to Monsieur Sosthenes de La Rochefoucauld, whose property had just been sequestered, although I was aware how indignant he was with me.

Monsieur de Lascours, to whom I had given my letter for the King, was not able to go as far as Ghent. He wished to entrust it to Monsieur de La Rochefoucauld, but the latter's remarks made him hesitate. Monsieur de La Rochefoucauld was sure, so he said, that my diamonds had been pawned to pay the troops to desert the King.

My mild manner had deceived him, and he had never imagined I could be involved in such intrigues. Doubtless it was what I had said about public enthusiasm which had convinced him I had been partly responsible for the Emperor's return.

When I complained about his willingness to believe reports which were in contradiction with my character as he knew it, he replied to Madame Du Cayla justifying his attitude. The first part of his reply was in accordance with that belief in the royalist cause which he had always held. He dwelt on his joy in sharing the misfortunes of those illustrious victims of a cause to which he was so utterly devoted.

In the second part he did not venture to try to explain my character or go into detail regarding my conduct, but he claimed not to be able to understand my fondness for my favorite flower, violets, which I always wore and which now served as an emblem for the supporters of the Empire.

I did not at first see how an intelligent man could establish any connection between such an important event as the Emperor's return and a modest flower that I wore every spring; but on second thoughts I did understand it on the part of a royalist, since these men who had imagined they could make a revolution by adopting a white ribbon as an emblem could imagine others had done the same with a flower.

Meanwhile the enthusiasm of the public had gradually become less marked. Certain laws had been passed not in accordance with the ideas which were popular just then.

People demanded unrestrained liberty, and it was necessary to take steps to defend the country against enemies both abroad and at home. Then too the refusal of the foreign governments to accept peace terms made people anticipate another war in the near future and this still further altered those favorable sentiments which the nation had at first entertained.

It was necessary to take measures for defense, and on all sides, everyone demanded liberty. Doubtless the Emperor had realized that the first results of that liberty would be harmful to him and would interfere with his plans, but yielding to public opinion he drew up an additional clause in the statutes of the Empire.

This clause provided for certain rights for which people had been asking a long time, but the manner in which they were accorded displeased everyone. People considered that this combination of an old and a new regime was merely a concession that existing circumstances made necessary, and was a means by which Napoleon later would reestablish absolute power.

At the same time the venomous and vehement criticism of certain men of letters provoked a movement of violent hostility toward the Emperor. The hopes of the royalists revived. Some of them relinquished the idea of obtaining the posts at court they had already asked for and withdrew to their country estates, there to await future events; others made up their minds to go to Ghent to explain to the King as best they might the reasons for their somewhat tardy devotion.

Still others remained in Paris to try to influence public opinion and help the enemies of France and of the Emperor by all means in their power. The return to Paris of the two kings, Jerome and Joseph, aroused a certain amount of uneasiness. People feared that they might still claim their former dominions and that France would be obliged to undertake the reconquest of those territories. The whole tendency on the part of the public opinion was toward peace and constitutional freedom under a popular sovereign such as the Emperor.

These sentiments were practically unanimous. Any plans for war or conquests would have deprived the Emperor of the affection of his subjects.

The anxiety which the sight of his brothers had aroused promptly vanished when the Emperor, so as to dissipate the least doubt as to his intentions, commanded all his brothers to resume their titles of Prince and Imperial Highness.

The Emperor, who had had so much difficulty in persuading his brothers to leave France in order to occupy foreign thrones, and had placed them there only that they might help maintain a vast system of international alliances, now realized that he would be obliged to keep his enemies as neighbors. But he counted on the fact that their subjects, who for ten years had lived under a system of government similar to ours, would remain the friends of France.

When nations have the same needs and aspirations the personality of the person who governs them becomes less important. The first time I met Prince Joseph he was very distant toward me. He did not come to call until a long time after he had returned to Paris and he called then only because the Emperor had asked him several times if he had been to see me.

Jerome came but once to my house. For a long while there had not been any intimacy whatsoever between us. The arrival of Prince Lucien produced an effect contrary to that of his brothers.

The fact that he was constantly opposed to the Emperor's wishes and the manner in which he had always declined to accept any high rank had caused people to form a high opinion of his character. It was well known that he had always proclaimed his liberal tendencies, and this was looked upon as a favorable sign.

He came to see me, was most polite, talked a great deal about my husband and urged a reconciliation between us. This I assured him was quite impossible. One evening when we were all gathered about the Emperor the question of the allowance of the various members of his family came up.

"France is not rich," he declared "economy is necessary. A million a year is all that a French prince should have. As far as you are concerned," he went on looking at me, "you will be allowed only 500,000 francs if you insist on refusing to live with your husband. It is simply a foolish idea of yours. You must make up your differences. Louis is getting old; he has become more reasonable."

"Sire," I replied, "no reconciliation is possible any longer. Since I did not rejoin my husband when you had disgraced him, I proved to the world that there was an insurmountable barrier between us."

"Nonsense, nonsense," replied the Emperor, "those were just silly fancies."

This conversation discouraged me profoundly. I recalled all that I had been through and foresaw that my misfortunes were about to begin again. I decided to ask for a private interview with the Emperor. He granted me one but hardly had I begun to explain the reasons which rendered it impossible for me to reconcile myself with my husband, when he dismissed me, saying he had work to do and that he would hear what I had to say that evening. I called several days in succession but with no success. Next, I wrote him and his reply was that we should have to await my husband's arrival.

Several days later I heard through Queen Julie that the King in a letter addressed to the Emperor had declined to come to Paris unless his brother consented to our being divorced.

The Emperor had referred to this suggestion as a mad idea and had not replied. Meanwhile my uncertainty was most painful. It was true that I still had my two sons with me, but I hardly dared console myself with their company. A divorce was contrary to my religious principles, and for any real peace of mind I should have had to have the assurance that I could secure a separation and continue to attend to my children's education.

Finally, after many entreaties I obtained from the Emperor a letter authorizing me to live away from my husband.

The fine weather made the Emperor decide to live at the Elysée in order to take the air without interrupting his work, which was proving too much for his health. One day he sent me an invitation by the Grand Marshal to lunch with him at Malmaison, and he named the persons he should like to have meet him there. I admit that I was reluctant to act as hostess at a house which I had left under such sad circumstances and to which I had never returned since.

Fearing the surroundings would provoke too violent emotions and wishing at least to experience them without being observed, I left Paris that same evening and went to Malmaison. How deeply moved I was to behold once more that place which my mother had adorned and which had now, after having been neglected for so long, become more or less a wilderness! Everything recalled her presence and

affected me deeply. I abandoned myself unrestrainedly to my grief. The night calmed me somewhat, and I was ready to receive the Emperor without appearing too much distressed.

He arrived at nine o'clock. It was clear that he too was deeply moved. He walked all over the grounds with me and everywhere he would stop and say, "How all this reminds me of her! I cannot believe she is no longer here."

After lunch he stepped into his carriage with me, Monsieur Mole and Monsieur Denon. He wished to talk to the latter on matters connected with art collections.

The other guests followed us in other carriages. Our drive was a long one, and the talk touched upon a thousand subjects. The Emperor praised the conduct of Monsieur de Sainte-Aulaire, ex-prefet of Toulouse, saying: "His proclamation was that of a good Frenchman who knows the dangers of a foreign invasion. All the Frenchmen should agree on that subject. I also approved of the way he spoke of the Bourbons."

I was glad to hear this favorable comment and I mentioned that it applied to one of my close friends whose character and mind I admired. I spoke to the Emperor about Madame de Staël's having said she intended to go and see him.

He said "I am sure she and I would become friends. At Elba I read her latest book and I cannot see why in the world the French police forbade its being sold here. I found nothing in it that could give offense to the government."

He spoke also of Monsieur Benjamin Constant. "He has a great deal of talent. His book on the freedom of the press pleased me very much. He reasons well."

He mentioned Monsieur de Talleyrand. "I knew for a long time that he was deceiving me, but I never thought he would go as far as he did. I treated him as I should have treated a gossipy old woman and let him keep on talking without paying attention to what he said."

On our return to the château the newspapers were brought to him. He had me read aloud his letter to Marshal Grouchy, printed by the Moniteur, in which he instructed the Marshal to protect the departure of the Comte d'Artois, who had just been arrested in the south of France.

He seemed satisfied by this act of magnanimity and our approval. Monsieur Mole said to me privately: "His letter is all very well, but I wish he had not insisted upon the return of the crown jewels. It would have been better not to ask for anything."

Before he left, the Emperor received the visits of the authorities of Rueil and the parish priest. On this occasion I again remarked something I had already noticed several times before. When receiving people, the Emperor had no graciousness of manner nor did he make any pretense of affability toward them. He went straight to the point and spoke of the subject which they came to see him about as though he wished to secure information and take some favorable action in regard to the matter.

This attitude on the part of a ruler appeared to me to be superior to that which consists in uttering banal phrases, which may flatter people's self-esteem but which do not hold out any hope for improving conditions.

Just before he stepped into his carriage the Emperor wished to see the room in which my mother had died. "Don't come with me," he said; "it would prove too great a strain for you."

When he left he seemed deeply stirred. I returned to Paris in his carriage because mine was not ready, and the Grand Marshal [Bertrand] accompanied us. The Emperor read official documents all the way and did not say a word to us. When we arrived at the Tuileries, we found Monsieur de Flahaut, who had just mentioned Monsieur de Talleyrand. "I knew for a long time that he was deceiving me, but I never thought he would go as far as he did. I treated him as I should have treated a gossipy old woman and let him keep on talking without paying attention to what he said."

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When we arrived at the Tuileries we found Monsieur de Flahaut, who had just come back from his mission of delivering messages to the Emperor of Austria and Empress Marie Louise. He had not been able to reach Vienna, but had been stopped at the frontier of the Kingdom of Württemberg and obliged to return to France.

This formal refusal on the part of the foreign powers to receive any communication from the Emperor proved that we could not hope to reach any understanding with them.

The Emperor wished the princes who belonged to his family to receive the formal visit of the various government officials. They were supposed to call first on Joseph, then on me, then on Lucien and finally on Jerome. This order of precedence provoked violent family dissensions.

Prince Lucien being older than my husband considered he should come before me. Jerome insisted that having been made prince before his brother Lucien received this title, he should follow him only if age alone was made the basis for this precedence. After a special family council to discuss the matter it was agreed that the senatorial decree (senatus-consultum), which placed the Emperor's family on the throne and recognized only two of his brothers, Joseph and Louis, as members of his dynasty, having been approved by the popular vote in 1804, could not undergo any modification.

To be sure, the Emperor had afterwards become reconciled with his other brothers, Jerome first and then Lucien. He had conferred on them the title of Prince of France, but this did not alter in any way

the provisions of the original law regarding the prerogatives of the various members of his family or the order of succession to the throne.

This was the decision that the cabinet council arrived at, and it was the Duc de Bassano who came to inform me of it. I confess it did not interest me particularly. Other far more important things were happening in France.

Madame Bertrand, the wife of the Grand Marshal, had just arrived in Paris from Elba. Following her husband's departure and that of the Emperor she felt she could not be separated from the Grand Marshal and, without regard for any danger, obeying only her impulse, she and her children had sailed on board of a very small vessel.

They had intended to land at Marseilles before even having had word how the Emperor's expedition had succeeded. When they landed, the city was still under the authority of the King's prefect, while the Duc d'Angoulême held a portion of southern France.

Madame Bertrand received outrageous treatment. Without respect for her sex she was marched off to prison by guards carrying fixed bayonets. Several high officials dared declare in her presence and that of her children that her husband was a common highway robber who would shortly be executed.

What seems still more incredible was that her brother-in-law Monsieur de La Tour du Pin, who was indebted to her for many favors, was at that time in Marseilles acting as special royal commissioner and did nothing to help her although possessing full authority to do so.

The Emperor's successes restored Madame Bertrand to liberty. When she arrived at Paris, she insisted that those who had been responsible for her imprisonment should not be molested.

It was from Comtesse Bertrand and the Emperor himself that I heard a number of details about his life while on Elba. He had a little estate there in the country called Saint-Martin which he used to ride out to daily, but this was not enough to satisfy his taste for activity.

His lodgings were most uncomfortable, but he did not complain. Frequently in the evening he would play vingt et un (21) or dominoes.

Some residents of the island were occasionally invited to see him, but the persons with whom he spent most of his time were Princess Pauline, Madame Mere and the members of their suite. No letters came from France, and this complete lack of news rendered their isolation still more painful.

About New Year's Day a single letter from Monsieur le Comte Lavallette had been delivered but it contained only New Year's greetings and expressions of his gratitude.

Nor were the exiles able to obtain by any other means the least indication of what was happening in France. Many English people made the trip to Elba out of curiosity. They received a cordial reception, and the Emperor seemed to enjoy talking to them.

Everyone questioned these visitors eagerly about France since they were the only ones from whom some true information could be secured. Several weeks passed without any newspapers being delivered.

Finally, all of those which had been delayed arrived at the same time. The Emperor read them eagerly and made up his mind to leave the island. The only person he informed of his intention was his mother, and he warned her to say nothing about it to anyone, least of all to Princess Pauline, whose lack of discretion alarmed him.

My mother-in-law has since described their conversation to me. It occurred one evening when they were alone together walking about the garden. The Emperor said: "France is miserable; she is losing every day some of those advantages I gained for her. What do you think of my project, mother? I wish to go and deliver her once more."

Madame Mere was overcome at this remark and replied, "Let me for a moment be only a mother, then I shall be able to answer you." Having regained her self-control she said firmly, "Yes, you must go; it is your destiny to do so. You were not made to die on this desert island."

Madame Bertrand also told me that Princess Pauline had done me a great deal of harm, as far as the Emperor and my mother-in-law were concerned, by repeating dozens of ridiculous stories that had sprung up because of my having remained in France. As soon as the situation had calmed down, Madame Mere landed at Marseilles. She came there from Naples, her daughter having sent a frigate to conduct her to that city as soon as the news of the Emperor's escape became known. Since the Emperor had said he would send for her as soon as he landed in France, Madame thought that this was a vessel he had dispatched.

Nevertheless, as she told me afterwards, fearing a surprise and thinking that the Queen of Naples might take advantage of the situation to seize Elba, she took all the necessary defensive measures and when she was leaving ordered the commanding officer not to surrender the island to anyone unless he came with orders from the Emperor.

Once she had landed at Naples and found out her mistake and the Emperor's success, she at once set sail again in order to arrive promptly in France.

Marshal Bertrand came to tell me of Madame Mere's arrival, saying at the same time that probably she would decline to receive me, for he knew that while at Elba she had condemned my conduct severely. He admitted that he had thought it best to mention this fact to the Emperor and added that the Emperor had replied: "What fault can Madame find with Hortense? She did not mind going to see the Queen of Naples. Hortense never took sides against me."

While thanking the Marshal for his advice I said that I knew what the Emperor's family thought about my stay in France, and, even though it had not helped them directly, at least it had frequently given me the opportunity to defend their cause.

Moreover, since Madame was my mother-in-law, I owed her respect and should therefore pay her a call. If she did not receive me, I should not go back.

I added somewhat maliciously: "A hostile attitude may do her more harm than it will me, for I know I am more popular than she is in France, and perhaps her conduct toward me will not be approved of."

Accordingly, I called on Madame. The Emperor had already been there that morning, and perhaps it was to his visit that I owed my cordial reception. Madame made no criticism of any kind and treated me just as she always had. Since his return the Emperor had been more inclined to see people.

He liked to have them around him and was ready to receive visitors. I secured an appointment one day for Tallien, who had come to ask me to do this as a favor. The republicans were well aware of the fact that the Emperor was their only hope of safety and that their cause and his were really the same.

There was no chance of a reconciliation between them and the Bourbons. Consequently, Tallien wished to attach himself openly to the Emperor, with whom he had been on bad terms since the expedition to Egypt.

The Emperor had never been able to forgive certain men, one of whom was Tallien, because after having asked permission to accompany him to Egypt they had suddenly become discouraged and returned to France.

He considered them deserters and felt that he was acting indulgently toward them by ignoring their existence. Tallien, who had helped my mother in the days of the Reign of Terror, received an allowance from my brother. That was why he applied to me.

The Emperor immediately granted his demand for an audience. Tallien came to see me as soon as he left the Emperor. He was deeply touched by the manner in which he had been received and told me that on arriving he had said to the Emperor, "Sire, I have given you cause to be dissatisfied with me."

"Perhaps I have been unfair toward you also," replied the Emperor. "For a long time, I have treated you severely. But we all make mistakes. Let us forget the past and may the present need of serving our country once more unite us."

When we were with him the Emperor enjoyed having us describe what had been done and said during his absence.

One day the Duchesse de Rovigo informed him that violets had become one of the emblems of his adherents. "That explains," he said, "something I could not understand when I caught sight of all the bunches of violets which the women waved at me from a distance. What started the idea?"

I then told him that after he had gone the soldiers always said he would come back when the violets bloomed again and that I had heard they always referred to him as Pere la Violette.

This amused him greatly. one day he inquired why I did not bring my children oftener to see him. The next day I brought them while he was having lunch.

The architect Fontaine was present. The question of the debts left by the Bourbon princes was being discussed. Monsieur Fontaine said that their palace had been quickly and sumptuously fitted up, especially the Palais-Royal, but they had not paid for anything.

The Emperor replied that he would settle all these debts himself, that none of the tradespeople would lose anything, and Fontaine was to tell them so. He also spoke of the temporary fortifications he was going to have built around Paris to defend the city against a surprise attack.

"It will doubtless frighten the Parisians; they will think the enemy is at the gate; but the past has taught us it is best to take precautions."

After dinner he received an Englishwoman called Lady Hamilton, I believe, who presented him with a bust of Fox she had carved, herself." He examined it, thought it was a good likeness, and said: "This present pleases me very much. I admired Fox a great deal. If he had lived and if his advice had been followed, there would not have been so much bloodshed, and your finances would have been in a better condition."

The Emperor afterwards went into the garden (for he was still at the Elysée). I followed him and he informed me that my husband wished a divorce and that otherwise he would not return to France.

He added laughingly that his brother doubtless had some love-affair on his mind, that the whole thing was perfectly ridiculous and he had thought it best not to reply to him. I then asked him to decide what was to be done with my children. He told me to select a good tutor for them, but said he could not prevent a father, no matter how silly he might be, from using his authority in regard to his children.

In reply to my fears that, owing to their extreme youth, they might not enjoy a proper education—which had always been the reason I had resisted my husband's demands—the Emperor replied "What can you do about it? If your son had been born lame or with only one eye you would be helpless. These are things that cannot be helped, to which one must resign oneself."

Thereupon he changed the subject and asked me if it were true as people said that Marshal Ney had declared he would bring him back in an iron cage? I replied that the Marshal's wife, after the story had got about, had told me it was not true.

The Emperor did not seem convinced and added: "Ney firmly intended to attack me, but when he saw that his troops were against this plan, he found himself obliged to go with the current. Since then he has tried to make much out of what he was unable to prevent.

You may be sure of this, but do not say so. My only supporters are the common people and all the army up to the rank of captain. The rest fear me, but I cannot count on them."

Finding him in a talkative mood I took advantage of the occasion to tell him that women generally were against him because he did not take the trouble to make himself agreeable to them, and that they exercised a greater influence on men's opinions than he was prepared to admit.

He began to laugh and said: "Shall we have to have the Empire ruled by the distaff? After I have paid them the compliment of saying that they are well or badly dressed what else is there for me to talk to them about? I have other things on my mind. I don't know what's happened to the women since I left. Nowadays they all talk politics. In my day they were interested in chiffons. Do you know that you too have become an important personage, someone in whom the public is interested? People speak of you with much respect. In Paris they go so far as to say you are the head of a political party, a conspirator."

I replied that this public interest in me did not suit either my personal tastes or my attitude toward public affairs. "I am not astonished at the remarks made about me. Your enemies help spread them in order to lessen the impression your miraculous return created on public opinion.

They pretend it was due to a conspiracy and since I was the only member of your family to have remained in France it is natural that I am assigned the leading role in the affair."

He then spoke of the Emperor of Russia. I was greatly pleased to tell the Emperor how admirably the Emperor of Russia had behaved toward my mother and me and how favorably he had spoken about him.

In short, I expressed all those feelings which my gratitude and a genuine friendship prompted. I added that his keen desire for universal peace convinced me he would not seek to renew hostilities.

The Emperor listened to me without saying a word and when I repeated what the Emperor of Russia had said about his reluctance to place the Bourbons on the throne and how it was England and Austria who had had the most to do with this, he stopped, looked at me hard and said, "That was what the Emperor of Russia told you? Then he is indeed a deceitful man."

Having said this, he went back to his study. On my return home I found Madame Campan who had just left Marshal Ney. She repeated to me the conversation they had had about recent events.

"The Queen was very rash in speaking as she did to my wife when I was leaving," the Marshal had said. What I told Madame Campan was what I had told the Marshal's wife. I had felt that the Emperor's expedition would be successful, but if the Marshal thought I spoke as I did because I possessed some special information, he was much mistaken.

She assured me that Marshal Ney, the bravest of the brave, was so hasty in his decisions that he frequently needed the advice of someone more familiar with political matters.

The only excuse for his conduct in the present instance was that he had saved the country from civil war, for he had started with the firm determination to resist the Emperor but had not been able to. His proclamation of allegiance to the Emperor had greatly upset his family, she told me, and his wife had not been able to conceal how badly she felt about his conduct.

Politics were causing trouble in many households. The Marshal himself, quite conscious that his conduct might be criticized, always replied, "The women know nothing about such things; it was all arranged beforehand," or gave some other equally futile explanation.

Meanwhile the preparations for a new campaign went forward rapidly. Every Sunday newly formed regiments of the Guard would parade through the streets.

The Emperor and all the officers about him worked unceasingly to reorganize the army which had become disorganized during his absence.

There was no longer hope of maintaining peace. Anxiety and sorrow once more filled Paris. The women who formed the backbone of the royalist party again became active and used every method to win over the officers from the cause they were about to defend.

Several officers after having asked to be sent on active service went over to the enemy. One day I said to the Emperor, "Sire, while you are with the troops, we shall need someone energetic here in Paris. What will happen if the incidents of last year repeat themselves? You cannot be everywhere at once, and I feel alarmed when I see the same men as before in command."

"But I am leaving you Marshal Davout," replied the Emperor. "He acted with sufficient energy at Hamburg, I should think, for you to feel reassured."

"Then everything will be all right," I answered. And said no more about it. Two plans were discussed. Should the enemy be attacked before they had collected all their forces or was it better to wait until they were on French soil? Some thought it better policy for the Emperor to place himself on the defensive, and until the attack was actually delivered to continue to make suggestions for peace, thus making it clear to all of Europe that he was sincerely opposed to renewed hostilities and proving he had done everything in his power to insure peace.

Others, on the contrary, felt that since there could be no doubt as to the hostile plans of the foreign powers any delay might prove a handicap and it was best to attack the English and Belgian forces before they had been reenforced by any other armies.

One day General de Lobau spoke of this to the Emperor in my presence. He declared he was in favor of attacking immediately. "Wait till we are entirely ready," answered the Emperor, hastily. "I need only a hundred thousand men and shall maneuver them so that they seem to be twice as many."

At this time Monsieur de Bourmont was in Paris without a post. The minister of war was suspicious of him and had rendered the Emperor equally suspicious.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère, who had taken part in the Russian campaign with him, since he had also served under my brother's orders, admired him, assured the Emperor that he was trustworthy and secured an audience for him.

Doubtless Monsieur de Bourmont managed to convince the Emperor of his devotion, for he was made a division commander and his children received scholarships. Shortly afterwards he went over to the enemy. A new incident occurred which proved to me that the animosity of the European monarchs in regard to the Emperor had not diminished. One day a letter was delivered at my door unsigned, but whose writing I recognized as that of Monsieur Boutiaguine, the Russian chargé d'affaires. I learned afterwards that it had been dictated, word for word, by Emperor Alexander. This is what he said I have delivered to our angel (an epithet he frequently applied to the Emperor of Russia) all your messages. I find his ideas unalterable. He loves your country and its people, he is sorry for them and separates them from the man who again has become their ruler. No peace, no truce nor any possibility of reconciliation with this man. All of Europe feels the same. Without this man any conditions you please. No favoritism toward any party, and once he is eliminated no more war. I beg to offer you the expression of my respectful devotion.

A note in exactly the same terms went to the Duc de Vicence. We considered it our duty to communicate these to the Emperor in order that he might make no mistake as to what Europe thought of him and of France. I was the more anxious to do this when I learned that my brother had just informed him of the immense preparations all the foreign powers were making to wage war against France and how impossible it would be to resist them.

My brother added that he advised him to have himself reelected Emperor and then abdicate in favor of his son. When I turned over Monsieur Boutiaguine's letter to him he read it without betraying the slightest emotion, and as he gave it back to me all he said was, "It is just the same as the one the Duc de Vicence received."

What were his real impressions? Did he imagine that it was some trap the foreign powers had set for him in order to make him separate his personal cause from the national one and thus allow them to triumph more easily? Or did he, on account of the enthusiasm which had greeted his return, feel that his genius could conquer all obstacles, that it was his duty to obey the wishes of the public, and believe he must be victorious, especially when he realized what nation it was that so expressed its faith in his power? I leave it for others to judge.

An idea which particularly preoccupied the Emperor was the degree of affection which Empress Marie Louise still felt for him. Her majordomo had just arrived in Paris. He was an intimate friend of Monsieur Devaux, who was still in my employ. The Empress's steward told Monsieur Devaux that the Emperor had sent for him and asked many questions regarding the Empress.

The servant was asked what letters he had brought with him to deliver. There was only one for the Duchesse de Montebello, and he had not dared hand this over to the Emperor because he knew it contained this sentence "I am closely watched, but you who know my opinions know how unnecessary this is."

Since, on the other hand, the steward feared to get into trouble if he attempted to conceal the truth, he came to ask Monsieur Devaux to advise him what course to pursue. Monsieur Devaux referred the matter to me.

This is what I told him: "Who employs this majordomo? He should carry out his employer's orders. To do otherwise is to betray his mistress and fail in his duty."

My advice was taken. The letter was delivered to the Duchesse de Montebello, and the Emperor knew nothing about it. All the reports we received agreed that Empress Marie Louise had declined to return to France. The Emperor seemed hurt by this desertion. I noticed this one day when he was speaking sympathetically to me about my mother and said: "I have no portrait of Empress Josephine. I should be pleased if you gave me one."

I sent him one which Quaglia had painted on a porcelain cup. The preparations for the ceremonies of the Champ de Mai were now completed. The delegations of electors (colleges électoraux) were arriving from every part of France as well as delegates from all the regiments in the army.

The cabinet ministers were supposed to receive them. The Emperor wished me to attend an evening reception given by Carnot, minister of the interior. I did so. The gathering was a large one and the musical part of the program was executed by the students of the Conservatory.

The concert ended with a song of mine, of which the refrain was, "We must defend our country." It was very appropriate, but I was almost embarrassed by the effect it produced.

Before leaving I spoke to everyone, and received from the heads of the delegations and the deputies the most solemn assurances of their devotion and affection for the Emperor's dynasty. Yet so many professions of loyalty, although too spontaneous not to be sincere, did not make much of an impression upon me when I stopped to think that a momentary setback would destroy their effect.

The day on which the ceremony of the Champ de Mai was to take place arrived at last. The Emperor was again to be proclaimed head of the French nation by a gathering of its representatives. The scene on the Champ de Mars was a most magnificent and impressive one. The center of the great field was filled with troops and the National Guard. A special enclosure was reserved near the Ecole Militaire for the legislative bodies and the delegations from the army.

The latter bore the former flags, the tricolors which they had been so reluctant to surrender and which were about to be blessed and returned to them. Opposite the throne was an altar surrounded by the clergy, and behind the throne a gallery for the princesses and the members of the court.

When the Emperor appeared, tumultuous cheers broke out. The Te Deum was sung but its solemn strains were interrupted by sounds of military music. The soldiers, whose martial aspect made them seem capable of defying the entire universe, assumed an attitude of devotion as they solicited divine protection on the cause they were about to defend.

The masses of spectators by their silence, following their frantic outburst of joy, seemed to share the solemnity of the moment. The entire character of the ceremony was most awe-inspiring. In the speeches made to the Emperor the following phrases were particularly noticed and attracted the most attention "We will no longer accept those rulers whom foreign powers have imposed on us. We cannot trust their promise; they cannot trust our oaths of allegiance. We wish rulers whom France shall herself have chosen."

At this moment a vast cry went up, "Long live the Emperor!" A few scattered shouts were heard of "Long live the Empress!"

Suddenly the officers rose and exclaimed, "We shall go and bring her back." The moment was a dramatic one on account of the emotion that prevailed and the unanimity of sentiment which made failure seem impossible. Yet when I momentarily turned my eyes from the martial display before me I conjured up a vision of those other armies, the leagued forces of all Europe bearing down upon us, and our defenders this little group of heroes, who alone would resist them and who might be annihilated in a few days' time.

I cannot describe what gloomy forebodings filled my heart. Several persons noticed my emotion, and when the Emperor had proceeded to the middle of the Champ de Mars where he was to distribute the eagles and review the troops the Duc d'Ortrante stepped up to me and inquired the reasons for my mournful air.

"Ah," I replied, "beyond all this ceremony lies the menace of war and that idea is a dreadful one."

"What else can you expect?" he said. "The Emperor has just missed a great opportunity. I advised him to abdicate today. Had he done so, his son would have succeeded to the throne and war would have been avoided."

"Alas!" I answered, "the thought of that conflict is a torture to me." But it would have needed more than human qualities not to have been affected by all this enthusiasm. Perhaps too the Emperor thought that instead of placing his son on the throne his retirement would merely have hastened France's downfall. It was natural when I saw so many of my country's brave defenders gathered together in one mass that I should think of my brother, who was absent.

He still formed a target for jealous hatred, doubts were expressed regarding his fidelity to the imperial cause, and the Emperor himself said to me one day, "Why does not your brother come back? One can always escape in disguise. A man can always go anywhere if he really wants to."

"Sire," I replied, "you know he is in danger of being imprisoned if he does not remain neutral, and he is not a man to break his parole." After the ceremony of the Champ de Mai we also attended the opening of parliamentary session.

The days that followed were taken up 'by farewells which had never been more painful, for although we never had a more just cause to defend, we had never been faced with more obstacles.

CHAPTER XVI
FROM WATERLOO TO MALMAISON (JUNE 11-JUNE 29, 1815),

Napoleon Leaves for the Front—Visit to Bercy—Benjamin Constant Reads Aloud—First News of the Disaster—The Return of the Emperor the Elysée—The Abdication—Plans for Flight—Napoleon Visits Malmaison—June 25—June 26—Memories of Josephine—Flahaut and Davout—June 27—Madame Bertrand—The Day of Departure—Flahaut and Lavallotte in Paris—The Departure of the Emperor—Hortense Returns to Paris—What France Owes Napoleon.

THE day set for the Emperor's departure for the front was a Sunday. During the family dinner, which always took place on that day of the week, he seemed in high spirits. I may be wrong, but this gaiety appeared to me to be assumed. He spoke about literature and was more talkative than usual.

Madame Bertrand, whom I saw afterwards, was worried and told me that before entering the drawing-room he had sent for her to come into his private reception room to say good-by and had made the following remark, "Well, well, Madame Bertrand, may we not have cause to regret the island of Elba!"

This doubt as to his success had alarmed her, for it was unusual, and I too was frightened to hear of it. That evening he received all his cabinet ministers. I brought him my children to say good-by.

He did not dismiss us till quite late, and he left Paris before day-break. The Prince d'Eckmühl had remained in command of the garrison of Paris. This was somewhat reassuring, as our position resembled so much that of the year before that we feared a similar outcome.

I remained at home, seeing little of the Emperor's brothers, who treated me as a complete outsider. I heard only the most important items of news through the newspapers.

Private letters informed us that the welcome the Emperor received in the provinces and from the troops fully equaled that which we had witnessed in Paris. Soon afterwards the sound of cannon told us of a first victory. But how many more victims would still be required!

The news of another military success, the more melancholy since it was gained against our countrymen, reached us from Vendee. Monsieur de la Rochejacquelein had been killed while fighting bravely for his cause.

People rejoiced at the news in my presence. I replied, "We should feel sad at being in a position that causes us not to regret the death of a Frenchman."

A feeling which I could not explain made me want to go and see some corners of Paris I did not know, and which I imagined I might be seeing for the first and last time. I visited Bercy, stopping at the house of Madame de Nicolay. There I met General de la Roche-Aymon, who had always been an ardent supporter of the Bourbons.

He related what the Faubourg Saint-Germain was saying about me. Their dislike was so violent and the stories they told so grotesquely exaggerated that we could not help laughing about it. Not only was I supposed to have taken an active part in bringing back the Emperor, but I was also accused of having ordered General Quesnel to be thrown into a river, although I had never even heard of a general by that name.

Nevertheless, I was surprised to hear Monsieur de la Roche-Aymon make fun of the seriousness with which the Duc de Berry had planned his campaign until March 20. I should have thought the only feeling that the fate of a family in distress and exile could arouse would be one of sympathy.

On the contrary, I frequently heard jests made at their expense. Marshal M____, for instance, who believed he was doing his duty when he conducted the King to the French frontier and refused any other post afterwards, allowed himself to ridicule the hasty flight and embarrassed attitude of the King, a man no longer young. One must always be fortunate in order to escape criticism.

I had given Monsieur Benjamin Constant an appointment to read me a short novel he had just written. We had reached the climax of the narrative and were all in tears, including the author, when word came that the Duc de Rovigo wished to speak to me.

He informed me that ugly rumors were circulating, and that it was said we had been defeated. That evening his wife and General Sebastiani called. They asked to speak to me privately. Their first words were: "All is lost. Our army has been wiped out. The Emperor will be here tonight, although he did everything he could to be killed."

"Alas," I queried hurriedly, "have many Frenchmen fallen?"

"None of our friends," replied the General. "I have just left King Joseph and I read all the dispatches he has received. The disaster is complete. More than thirty thousand men lie on the battlefield."

"Ah, our poor Frenchmen!" I exclaimed, and I felt all my courage leave me. But I quickly regained control of myself as the full extent of this new blow dawned on me.

Good fortune had definitely abandoned us, but the more cruel the wound the greater need for energy to resist its effects. I said to the General "Our cause is hopeless, but I trust all is not lost for France. We must keep cool. Should not word be dispatched to General Rapp, who is in command at Strasbourg, telling him at all costs not to surrender the city to the enemy, but to prepare to resist? All our efforts must be bent to the task of escaping the foreign invasion."

The General replied, "The Emperor will be here tonight. He has doubtless already thought of that." I returned to my drawing-room, and no one guessed by my attitude that anything special had taken place.

The next morning, I heard the Emperor was back. I at once hastened to the Elysée filled with emotions I cannot put into words. He was in conference with his brothers.

I did not see him. I went to see Madame Bertrand. She was with her husband and gave me details of what had taken place. The Emperor had only returned in order to ask the Senate and Chamber of Deputies for more support. He still hoped all was not over and had dispatched his aides-de-camp to rally the scattered troops.

"Ah," I said to General Bertrand, "the Emperor's cause is really lost this time. It was a question of winning a single battle. He is mistaken if he thinks he will meet with a reception similar to that which brought him back to Paris. The French are so changeable."

Had he won, everybody would have been on his side. He has been defeated; no one will support him." "Why did we ever leave Elba?" suddenly asked Madame Bertrand.

"What will become of the Emperor now?" This idea oppressed all of us. I should have wished him to leave immediately for America. Madame Bertrand, on the other hand, insisted the English, so liberal and enlightened in their ideas, were the only nation worthy of receiving him and capable of understanding him.

I went out on foot along the Champs Elysées and I sent my carriage to wait for me on the Place de la Concorde. I had Madame Dillon with me. As we passed the gardens of the Elysée I saw a well-dressed woman talking to the sentry on duty.

This seemed to me unusual. I approached quietly, accompanied by Madame Dillon and another lady who was in attendance. I heard the woman say, "You are being deceived. He is lost beyond hope of recovery. He has abandoned his army."

To this the sentinel replied, "Go away. I will never desert him." Not being able to see the Emperor just then I returned at six o'clock to the Elysée. He was alone in the garden. Deeply moved, I advanced to greet him. I cannot tell whether he wished to conceal his own emotion, but he assumed an air of surprise as he inquired,

"What is the matter? What have people been telling you?"

"That you have met with misfortune, Sire," I replied. He was silent for several moments, then turned and entered his study, motioning me to follow him. He appeared exhausted from moral and physical fatigue.

Sitting at his desk he unsealed a package of letters, but did not read them, and it was not until dinner was announced that he seemed aware of my presence.

"You have doubtless already dined," he said. "Will you come and keep me company?" I followed him.

During dinner he made only some insignificant remarks. He seemed sunk in a profound reverie. He returned to the drawing-room, where his brothers and mother joined him, went with them into the garden, and I left the palace. The Senate and Chamber, so I was told, were determined to depose the Emperor unless he abdicated immediately, and he was informed that this was the only means by which he could save France from a foreign invasion. The Powers had said so.

Monsieur de Metternich also wrote this to the Duc d'Otrante who, secretly, showed the letter to all the members of the Senate and Chamber. Thus, the man who turned to the spot where all the national forces centered in the hope of arousing the energy of the nation found everyone against him.

Those officers who had escaped after the defeat envied the fate of their brothers-in-arms lying dead on the field of battle. Not believing it possible to sustain such an unequal struggle, some despaired completely of their country's cause; others, placing their trust in the promises of the foreign powers, thought that, once the Emperor was sent away, the nation would be allowed to choose its ruler and not have one imposed by force. Still others were of the opinion that anything was better than to place themselves and their country at the mercy of the foe.

Monsieur de La Bedoyère was one of those who held absolutely to the last point of view. He regretted that the Emperor had not presented himself before the legislative bodies covered with the dust of conflict, as had been agreed when he left the army.

To separate the Emperor's fate from that of the country was to sacrifice the former without saving the latter. Monsieur de La Bedoyère declared that every Frenchman should rally to the defense of the imperial eagles, should enlist at once and, inspired by the Emperor's military genius, rise to those heights of heroism which had assured the triumph of our Revolution.

He predicted that if any other course were pursued the result of our blind confidence would be a series of calamities: the Bourbons first, and in their train, tribute money, personal revenge and national humiliation.

Meanwhile the Chamber of Representatives in a hurry to discard the man who in its opinion had become the sole obstacle that stood between the French people and peace clamored for an abdication.

At the same time, it discussed the principles of political freedom as though armed Europe were advancing to enforce this ideal. As for the Emperor, what could he, alone as he was, hope to accomplish?

Once more the genius was obliged to bow before the mistaken judgment of the mob. He abdicated in favor of his son. King Jerome had shown his courage at Waterloo and been wounded there?

He returned to Paris. Monsieur de Flahaut and all the other aides-de-camp whom the Emperor had dispatched to rally the scattered troops and mobilize the National Guard came to report the result of their mission.

They announced that there were many more troops available than we believed, but that the news of the Emperor's abdication had spread discouragement everywhere and many of the soldiers had thrown away their weapons and returned to their homes. While the news of the death of so many heroes had plunged us into profound mourning, the ladies who supported the royalist cause displayed an absolutely indecent rejoicing.

I can understand hatred for a certain dynasty, an ardent desire to see it overthrown, but that people should celebrate a victory won by foreign troops over our national forces, the defeat of our country and the sacrifice of the lives of thirty thousand Frenchmen, that is something I cannot understand. I spent all my time at the Elysée.

A crowd constantly stood outside the garden. The common people were as eager to catch a glimpse of their sovereign in the hour of his distress as the upper classes were to avoid him.

The constant cheering of this crowd had something poignant about it, since in this hour of distress it recalled the memories of the past. Some officers, catching sight of the Emperor walking about the garden, even scaled the wall, and throwing themselves at his feet exclaimed, "Do not abandon us."

The Emperor himself appeared touched by this devotion. Prefect of Police Real, who witnessed this scene, told me privately: "And to think, madame, that, acting on orders received from the Provisional Government, I had money distributed to quiet this patriotic ardor."

As for me my one thought was: How can the Emperor be saved? I watched him talking on and on with his brothers without ever reaching a decision. The longer he waited, the more he ceased to be master of his fate, but it seemed that no one, not even he, cared about what happened to him.

I was annoyed by this state of indecision. This apparent immobility roused in me a desire to take active steps. First of all, I told Madame Mere my ideas. She approved of them, and I decided to enter the Emperor's study. He was sitting facing the fireplace.

Meneval, his former secretary, stood beside him. My heart beat violently. The thought that I was about to offer advice to the man who had never accepted it from anyone intimidated me. But the idea of the danger he was in conquered my shyness and I said to him quickly "Sire, since the French nation thus abandons you, it does not deserve your consideration. Only think of what is best for you personally. Do not lose an instant in insuring your own safety. If it is America you choose as a refuge, hurry off to a port before England will have learned of your decision. If you prefer Austria, fix your terms without delay. Perhaps its ruler may remember you are his son-in-law. As for the English they would consider it too great an honor if you appealed to them. They would imprison you in the Tower of London. The Emperor of Russia is the one man you can trust. He was once your friend. He is loyal and generous. Write to him. He will appreciate it."

The Emperor did not answer a word. He listened with a calmness that contrasted with my nervousness and then said: "And you? What are you planning to do? Will you go to your country-place near Geneva?"

I admit I could not resist feeling a momentary irritation to be still treated as though I were a child. "Ah, Sire, I do not care what becomes of me: I care only about your fate. Even the least favorable of the courses I suggest is better than the apathy which has come over you."

At this moment one of his chamberlains, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, came in through 'the private apartments. "Well," said the Emperor, "you have just left the Chamber of Deputies? What is happening there?"

"The attitude of the members is a thoroughly satisfactory one," replied the chamberlain with a satisfied air.

"Napoleon II has been proclaimed amid much enthusiasm."

"But," interrupted the Emperor, "what is being done?"

"The articles of the constitution are being discussed." "Ah," exclaimed the Emperor, rising abruptly, "we have gone back to the days of Byzantium. People stop to discuss when the enemy is at the gates."

A few minutes later I saw the Duc de Vicence, to whom I related my conversation. He shared my preference for Russia, and the next day when speaking to the Emperor about the same subject, he received the following answer:

"Austria, never. They wounded me too deeply by keeping my wife and my son. To surrender to Russia is to make myself the prisoner of a man to surrender to England is to surrender to a nation."

One evening I was at the Elysée when the Emperor came up to me and said "Malmaison belongs to you. I should enjoy going there and I should be pleased if you would stay there with me. I shall leave tomorrow to go there, but I do not wish to occupy the Empress's suite."

I expressed my pleasure at being able to be useful to him and I made all arrangements for my departure. When several of my friends heard the news, they came and begged me not to go and settle at Malmaison.

They declared that, with the violent animosity certain people felt toward me in Paris, there would be all sorts of rumors spread to influence public opinion against me. Nor must I forget the malicious gossip of which I had previously been made the object.

To remain with the Emperor up to the last moment was to prevent even the allied monarchs from being able to continue their protection of me.

All these arguments might have influenced me if I had been sufficiently petty to stop and consider my private interests. I replied that I would never abandon the man whom I had considered as my father, that now in his hour of misfortune I could best prove my gratitude, that since my conscience was clear I should feel myself above the criticism of society.

It did not matter if others were dissatisfied with my conduct so long as I personally was pleased with it. As for the foreign kings, the only things I hoped from them were passports which would allow me to retire to some far-away, secluded spot.

The next morning, I left accompanied by Madame d'Arjuzon, having concealed my children in the house of a person whom I could trust in order to be able to devote all my attention to the Emperor.

I reserved one wing of the château for him and I kept the other containing the Empress's apartment for me and my attendants. I made the small gallery into a dining-room where we and our suite were to have dinner.

The Emperor arrived in the morning. I felt sad when I went to receive him to think how this place which he had visited when at the height of his success and fame now again received him reduced to the last stage of wretchedness, since he was deprived even of the presence of his former devoted and affectionate companion.

I, the daughter of that companion, was able to offer him only a slight comfort in his sorrow, and I was conscious of all I lacked. I informed him of all the measures I had taken to insure his comfort. He approved of them. Then I left him by himself, asking him to summon me when he might happen to desire my company.

That evening the Emperor's brothers and the Duc de Bassano and Monsieur Lavallotte came out to see us. I remained in the drawing-room with all the officers belonging to my household and that of the Emperor.

Our only topic of conversation, the only thing we thought about, was how to save him. The young officers who had accompanied him assured us that the royalists were going to try to kidnap him.

They prepared to defend him as best they might. Nobody went to bed. Thirty men from the dragoon regiments who had remained at the near-by replacement camp on account of their wounds and were not properly armed, Monsieur Gourgaud, Monsieur de Montholon, Monsieur de Montaran, four orderlies, the aide-de-camp who was on duty, Monsieur de Las Cases the chamberlain, a young page Sainte-Catherine d'Audiffredi, a young American who was a relative of my mother, and my equerry Monsieur de Marmol, were all the force we could muster in the way of a defense.

These gentlemen, however, managed to reassure me by the opinion they had of the royalists' courage, which they were continually making fun of. I retired late accompanied by Madame d'Arjuzon.

All the men stayed awake. The morning following his arrival at Malmaison the Emperor sent for me about eleven o'clock. He was walking alone in the gardens. The weather was magnificent. He inquired about my health and asked what I had done the night before, but did not wait for a reply and continued: "Poor Josephine! I cannot become accustomed to this place without her. It always seems as though I were going to catch sight of her behind the next hedge, picking the flowers she loved so dearly. Poor Josephine!"

Noting how this topic depressed me he added "It is true she would be very sad if she could see the way things are going at present. There was only one subject we ever disagreed about, her debts. How I used to scold her about them! She was certainly the most charming person I have ever known. She was a true woman with all the qualities that word conveys, quick, lively and so good-hearted. Have another portrait made of her for me. I want it as a medallion."

I promised to have this done. The Emperor's brothers and his mother arrived together. The latter seemed greatly downcast. I called King Joseph aside and again began to plead with him for the Emperor to decide on some line of action.

All he was willing to say was, "You are right." I finally withdrew. Our attitude was natural enough, all things considered, the Emperor's one thought being to save France and mine to save him. In the drawing-room I found Monsieur de Flahaut, Monsieur de La Bedoyère and the Duc de Rovigo, who informed me that in Paris only a few royalists had dared show themselves. A moment later a man arrived to inform the Duc de Rovigo of the plot formed by five hundred royalists to murder the Emperor that night. The Duchesse de Rovigo also appeared.

On the way to Malmaison she had met several men on horseback, among them one of her cousins who was a notorious royalist. This news was passed on to the Emperor. He paid no attention to it.

Toward nightfall our young men, who during the day had gone to Paris, began again to prepare to take precautionary measures against a sudden attack. The idea of seeing fighting and people killing one another under my very eyes made me tremble, and when I heard the remark,

"We shall defend ourselves as they did at Bender," I did not know whether, if such a thing happened, I should not prove a coward. During one of these conversations, which occurred frequently, we heard the report of a pistol. Everyone sprang to arms except the Emperor, who did not seem to have noticed it. Our guard dashed into the park. Nothing was found there, and everything calmed down once more. Had the Provisional Government, which was in a hurry for the Emperor to leave, hired someone to make a demonstration in order to frighten him?

No one ever knew just what had taken place. No emotion was spared me. I was forced to assist at another painful scene.

Two generals who had gravely compromised themselves on behalf of the Emperor hurried to Malmaison with the news that the Provisional Government was selling France to the Bourbons, that the scaffold awaited those who had taken sides with the Emperor, that flight was absolutely urgent but that they lacked the means to escape.

Unless the Emperor provided the necessary funds, they would blow their brains out in his presence. I should have so willingly taken all these burdens upon myself in order to spare the man who so urgently needed leisure to decide on his personal fate. But the generals insisted on seeing him, and they obtained what they seemed to require so urgently.

I also received the visit of the wife of General Girard, who had been mortally wounded at Waterloo. He had been left alone and dying at an inn fifty miles from Paris.

His wife was penniless and in great distress. She was anxious to reach and succor her husband and had come to demand the Emperor's assistance. Scarcely had I mentioned the matter to the Emperor when word arrived that the General had breathed his last.

Thus, all those forms of anguish which accompany misfortune were forced upon me. General Drouot, who felt that the army was in desperate need of its leaders and that at such times his duty to his country took precedence over his duty to his sovereign, decided to act on the Emperor's suggestion and assume command of the Guard.

He left for the front after bidding us farewell. We were constantly on the alert, but as our army drew nearer Paris the royalists again became alarmed and a surprise attack on Malmaison grew more unlikely.

In the evening the Emperor received the visit of an officer who on behalf of the army urged him to place himself once more at the head of his troops. I do not know whether the Provisional Government was informed of this, but the next day it sent General Beker to take over the command of our personal body-guard.

When Madame d'Arjuzon repeated to me a remark the General had whispered to her, "They fear he may attempt some rash enterprise," I felt we were really prisoners, and exclaimed sadly:

"Whoever could have imagined that someday the Emperor would be the prisoner of Frenchmen at Malmaison!" Yet as he was surrounded by a group of young men devoted to the imperial cause General Beker's mission could not have had any practical effect. All the young officers were eager to see the Emperor leave at once, place himself at the head of the army, once more risk his luck, and try to save France.

I, and I alone, being calmer than they were thought the time for such an attempt had passed. Too many political parties had now openly declared against him.

Deserted by those who represented the nation, the only ones who could have conferred the proper authority on him, his only thought now should be how to insure his personal safety and to escape swiftly from France.

Nevertheless, in Paris people still talked about the wild plans that were being made at Malmaison, and held me responsible. My fears for the Emperor's future diminished somewhat when I heard that two frigates were waiting for him in the harbor of La Rochelle.

In connection with this, however, a difficulty arose. The Provisional Government wished the Emperor to proceed aboard immediately, but he, on the other hand, wished first to have the assurance that it was he who should decide whither the vessels were to proceed.

Monsieur de Flahaut was sent to Paris to arrange matters. A violent scene took place between him and the minister of war, the Prince of Eckmühl, in which the Prince went so far as to declare that he was prepared himself to arrest the Emperor if he did not leave the country.

Monsieur de Flahaut, indignant at this attitude, replied, scornfully: "Such remarks do not surprise me coming from a man whom I have always seen groveling at the Emperor's feet."

The question of the two frigates still further delayed the Emperor's departure. Every day seemed to me to add to the Emperor's danger and lessen his chances of escaping from the English.

I again took the matter up with King Joseph, the person who was the most frequently with the Emperor. I pointed out how urgent it was that the Emperor should leave France, for to stay where he was even a few hours longer would perhaps mean that he could not slip away.

I said that what he should do was to secure a passport under another name, but with a description that fitted him, and hasten to Le Havre, while I undertook to guard Malmaison. I was sure I could manage to arrange things so that people would think he was still there.

Nothing was done, however, and the days passed without altering the situation in any way.

At noon one day the Emperor sent for me. He was in his private garden with a man I did not know and a young boy who seemed to be about nine or ten years old.

Taking me aside the Emperor said, "Hortense, look at that child. Whom does he resemble?"

"Your son, Sire. He is the very image of the King of Rome."

"You think so, do you? Then it must be true. I did not believe that I had a sensitive nature, but the sight of him has made a deep impression on me. You seem to know who he is. How did you find out about it?"

"Sire, the public has spoken a good deal about the matter, and this close resemblance proves that people were not mistaken."

"I admit that for a long time I doubted he was really my son. Nevertheless, I had him educated in a boarding-school in Paris. The man in whose charge I had placed him wrote me asking what my intentions were in regard to his future. I wished to see him, and like you I was struck by his resemblance to my son."

"What are you going to do with him, Sire? I should have been glad to look after him; but do you not believe that to do so would give people a chance to say more malicious things about me?"

"Yes, you are right. I should have been glad to know that he was under your care, but people would certainly say he was your son. When I have settled down in America, I shall have him join me there."

He then went over to the gentleman, who was waiting a little distance off. I approached the boy, who was as lovely as a picture. I asked him if he liked the school he was in, and what games he played. He answered that lately he and his companions had pretended to make war on each other. There were two sides, one called the Bonapartists, the other the supporters of the Bourbons. I asked him to say which side he belonged to. "I am one of the King's men," he replied. When I inquired the reason he answered, "Because I like the King and do not like the Emperor." This made me think that he had not the slightest suspicion of his birth or whom he had come to see. I found his position so strange that I asked him why it was he did not like the Emperor. "I have no particular reason except that I belong to the side of the King."

The Emperor joined us, dismissed the man who was in charge of the boy, and went in to lunch. I followed him, and he kept repeating: "The sight of the child affected me. He looks like my son. I did not think I could experience the emotions he aroused. And so you were really struck by his resemblance to me and my son?"

All during his lunch he kept referring to the subject. Monsieur Gabriel Delessert arrived from Paris to inform me that one of General Exelmans' aides-de-camp, who had just left the advanced posts, thought that the enemy's troops were taking a move in the direction of Saint-Germain, and that doubtless their intention was to cut off the Emperor's retreat.

The Emperor was in his study. I went in to give him the news Monsieur Delessert had brought. He sent for him and in my presence asked him some explanations of what he had just said.

On the table was a large map, on which pins indicated the position of the various army corps. The Emperor changed several of them in accordance with what Monsieur Delessert told him. He inquired the estimated force of the hostile troops that were surrounding Paris, and on receiving the answer exclaimed, "Poor France! To think she must submit to a handful of Prussians!"

When I was again alone with the Emperor I ventured to ask him some questions about our position. I inquired if our forces were larger than those of the enemy. "Certainly not," he replied. "But what cannot one do with Frenchmen?"

The Duc de Bassano and Monsieur Lavallotte were announced, and I withdrew.

Several ladies from Paris came out in the evening to say good-by to him. Madame Duchatel was among them. He received them all in his study, and I did not see him again till the next day.

When I awoke, I was told that the young Polish woman, Madame had already arrived accompanied by her children, that she had made her farewells to the Emperor and had asked to see me.

She was all in tears. I shared her grief and invited her to stay and lunch alone with me so that people might not see her in such a state. I learned on coming down to the drawing-room that the minister of the navy had come during the night, and the Emperor at last had been granted the right to do what he pleased with the frigates, and consequently nothing further prevented his departure.

At that moment he was engaged in examining the carriages chosen for his trip. The persons who were with him came back indignant at the shocking state these vehicles were in. Doubtless the equerry in charge, who had retained his post in spite of the various political upheavals, hoped to make his future equally safe and was already showing his devotion to the next ruler by providing the Emperor with the carriages that were the least solid. I suggested he take my traveling carriage, but he declined, wishing to leave in an open calash.

He asked me what my plans were and what means I possessed. I told him that all I had were my diamonds and those of my mother, as the old debts had absorbed her estate. I was planning to retire to Switzerland, where I wished to lead a simple life, and had enough money to do this. I added that he had better take a few diamonds with him and that mine were at his service.

It was he who had given them to me, and they belonged to him. He consented to take one string worth about two hundred thousand francs. He insisted on giving me a note for this amount although I obstinately resisted his doing so, regretting bitterly to be able to do so little for the man to whom I owed everything.

Then, for the first time, he talked to me about his plans, told me he was going to the United States, and that the only thing those who bore his name had to do was to join him there. "That is the only way your children can succeed," he said, "for if the Bourbons come back on the throne, they will stay there longer than people think."

Just then we heard shouts from the highway. We went to see what was happening. All the people in the chateau joined us. We saw several hundred soldiers, facing toward Malmaison, throwing their hats in the air and crying, "Long live the Emperor."

They were being sent to Saint-Germain. The enthusiasm they displayed for the man who was obliged to leave them made a deep impression on all those present. The Emperor seemed touched by it.

"It is not cheers but acts which I need," he said, and at once withdrew to his study.

His mother and his family came to receive his farewells. Madame Mere asked me what she could do until the time came when she could go to join her son in America. I suggested that she might return to Paris, believing that she could expect only good treatment from everyone, including even her son's enemies.

We could not remain isolated at Malmaison after the Emperor's departure, nor could we, without passports bearing the signature of the allied sovereigns, risk attempting to make our way through the hostile armies.

Proper passports were the only favor we asked. The Emperor of Russia would certainly not refuse such a simple request for something we were entitled to.

Madame Bertrand, having made all her preparations for accompanying the Emperor with her husband, arrived from Paris. She insisted with her customary vivacity that he should seek refuge in England, where he would be marvelously well received. She went to see him in his study, and told me afterwards that when she expressed her fear of witnessing a naval battle he had promised not to resist if he encountered English vessels while on the high seas.

She gave me further details as to his future plans. He intended to settle in America and to live the life of a private citizen. "Queen Hortense is to come there later with her children," he had added.

"She will make our stay still more agreeable."

We urged Madame Bertrand not to attempt to follow her husband immediately, but to wait till he had reached his destination; her attachment to him, however, caused her to refuse the idea of being separated from him.

Her willingness to share the perils of such an expedition could not fail to win our sympathy. Perhaps too we felt a little envious of a domestic happiness that made such courage seem quite a matter of course.

She and I spent the evening walking about together. The weather was superb, and the stillness of the night was a striking contrast to the inner turmoil we were experiencing.

Yet it was difficult, even while we breathed such pure air and let our eyes wander over such enchanting landscapes, to forget that unhappiness and misfortune were so close at hand.

We had been sitting side by side for some time on a rustic bench when we caught sight of the Emperor himself, who had come to join us.

He seemed to share the peaceful tranquility that this restful scene inspired, but as he seated himself beside us on the bench he exclaimed: "Ah, how beautiful Malmaison is! Surely, Hortense, we should be happy if we might only remain here."

I could not reply. My voice would have betrayed my emotion. It was the first time I had ever known him to care for any particular place. I was the more surprised because I had never imagined such things would affect him. When men desert us we turn instinctively to Nature, who does not deceive. For who is there who can without emotion leave a spot where he has been happy and which he will never see again, a spot associated in his mind with so many visions of success, fame, fortune and happiness, a spot where so many hearts have submitted to his spell, whence he has set forth to conquer the world, and where now he is spending the last few days that he is allowed to live in his own country, before setting out alone, banished from his native soil, to face whatever uncertain fate awaits him overseas?

The evening passed as the others had done. We remained in the drawing-room talking about the Emperor's trip with the persons who were to accompany him, and he stayed in his study with the Duc de Bassano. The next morning [June 29, 1815] all preparations were made for the departure.

King Joseph arrived early. He was having a private talk with the Emperor, when Rousseau, my valet de chambre, brought me a letter from Paris. My entire household was in a state of terror over what had happened to me.

They believed the enemy had already reached Malmaison, and that it was impossible for me to return to Paris. The bridge at Neuilly was already barricaded, and Monsieur de Brack, the young man who had talked to me at the masked ball and who was a major in the Lancers of the Guard, had come to inquire anxiously about me and describe the danger we were in at Malmaison since the enemy's outposts were already encircling the capital.

I hastened to the Emperor's study to communicate this news to him. He received it very calmly and declared things were not as alarming as people supposed, but that nevertheless it would be more prudent for me and all the other ladies to return to Paris.

"Sire," I replied, "the only person I am worried about is you. You should treat this information more seriously because it comes from a brave young officer."

"My daughter," he answered, "we know what war is. Hurry home and take Madame Bertrand with you, for I can do nothing with her husband so long as she is present."

I urged him to leave at once, to think of the state of rage which animated the hostile troops. "The Prussians are leading the advance," I said to him, "and you have every reason to fear their violence."

"What can they do?"

"Sire, they might go as far as to assault you personally."

"Very well, I shall go then," he answered with an indifferent and resigned air, more to please me than because he realized the extent of the danger.

He sent for Monsieur de Resigny, one of the orderlies, and sent him to reconnoiter how far away the enemy were.

Monsieur de Flahaut and Monsieur de Lavallotte arrived from Paris and confirmed the news I had received. Then, as though the approach of the foe caused him to put away any idea except the danger which threatened France, the Emperor with an air of deep emotion and a consciousness of what he still could perform addressed these two gentlemen in the following words, which have impressed themselves too deeply on my mind for me to be able to forget them "Go to the Provisional Government and tell them that I can still assemble the army, I can halt the enemy's advance and give the Provisional Government time to negotiate, safeguard the interests of France, and make the allied monarchs recognize her rights and the liberty she is about to lose.

I promise on my word as general, as citizen and as a soldier to leave the country the same day I shall have saved the capital."

After having said this, he dismissed them.

Meanwhile, the orderly officer Resigny, who had been sent to the bridge of Chatou, had returned. He had arrived at the village of Chatou just after the bridge had been blown up in accordance with orders from the minister of war.

We saw the flames from our windows, and they proved to us the enemy was really close at hand. The two gentlemen [Flahaut and Lavallotte] had scarcely left when I was already anxiously awaiting their return.

The delay distressed me, for I had no doubt that the Emperor's offer would be refused, and the danger increased hour by hour. I took him the diamond collar, which he had finally consented to accept. I had arranged it and sewn it on a ribbon so that he could wear it as a belt.

I attached it myself. Monsieur de Flahaut was announced. He described how his mission had failed. The Emperor said to him: "Why wouldn't they accept? It was because they still feared me, wasn't it?"

Monsieur de Flahaut replied that the heads of the government feared that the Emperor's presence would prove an added difficulty during the negotiations, and make people doubt their sincerity.

He added that he thought the government was also alarmed at the idea of the Emperor once more being in command of his troops, whom he might not consent to abandon.

"Did you repeat faithfully the terms of my promise to leave as soon as I had saved Paris?"

"Yes, Sire." At this the Emperor with a decided gesture rose from his chair and said: "They refuse. Then let us leave. I have nothing to reproach myself with. I have done my duty to the land. I wished to make a last effort for France. Now she will be sacrificed and placed at the mercy of her enemies."

I embraced him, tears in my eyes. He bade me farewell, urging me again to return immediately to Paris and take Madame Bertrand with me. But she and I resolved that neither of us would leave until we were sure what had become of him.

The Emperor spent his last moments talking privately to his brother Joseph. He had put aside his uniform and put on a gray dress-coat.

Then General Beker returned from Paris bringing the same reply as that which Monsieur de Flahaut had received, and as his arrival was what everyone was waiting for, the traveling carriages were brought up to the door.

The Emperor had with him in his calash, General Beker, General Bertrand and the Duc de Rovigo. In another carriage were Colonel Gourgaud, Messieurs de Montholon, de Las Cases and Lallemand.

Others who accompanied the Emperor, and among whom were Messieurs de Resigny, Planat, Chiappe, Autric, Sainte-Catherine d'Audiffredi, left by another route. Instead of being as heartrending as it should have been, this parting relieved my soul of a burden that had been weighing on it for a long time.

Indeed, I felt that a life which was very precious to me was at last out of danger and free, and would continue to remain so. What a mistake I made! Before returning to Paris I walked down the handsome gallery at Malmaison, where so many precious art objects were collected.

These, in addition to my diamonds, were all the fortune that was left me. At that moment it occurred to me for the first time that here was all my children's inheritance, yet I had entirely forgotten to give any orders to have these objects safely stored away. Entirely absorbed by my thoughts regarding the Emperor's fate, how was it possible for me to think of anything else?

Now the allied troops were too close at hand to give me time to have these paintings taken down and sent to Paris. I made up my mind to risk losing them, if Fate so decided, and I hastened to rejoin my children.

I set out accompanied by Madame Bertrand, Madame d'Arjuzon and Madame Caffarelli. The latter, although not a member of my household, had come daily to Malmaison to place herself at my disposal, offering to help me in any way that was possible.

It was sweet, in these sad moments, to encounter such a spirit of devotion. I was obliged to take a roundabout route to return to Paris, and reenter the capital by way of Saint Cloud, for the bridge at Neuilly was already barricaded. Madame Bertrand kept talking to us all the time about her trip and her fears regarding her children. I suggested taking charge of her little girl, who was ill; but she could not bear the idea of being separated even momentarily from one she loved.

I pointed out that, although she was to be pitied on account of the dangers, she was exposing herself to, at the same time people might envy her, because the courage with which she encountered these dangers sprang from a happiness which no political misfortunes could affect.

Many sad thoughts suggested themselves to me in connection with the position in which the Emperor now found himself. He had been the Messiah of the masses, who by his force of character, will-power and military prestige had summoned the people of all countries to share the riches of the universe.

He had obtained for them their share of earthly happiness. As Christ had rescued them from moral slavery, he had freed them from the bonds which prevented all but a privileged few from enjoying those positions and honors which certain castes for centuries had jealously guarded as their own.

It is true that before his ascension to the throne there had been the French Revolution, which had destroyed all social standards, but those excesses, which are necessary in order to clear the air, may in turn, through exhaustion, through hope of benefits too long deferred, through urgent need of rest, lead a nation back to the very conditions against which it rebelled.

It was the Empire which established the preeminence of personal merit over hereditary rank. No one except the Emperor, dictator of the social laws of all Europe, could have wrought such a change. The change had proved a success it had been a complete one. And now there was cause to fear not only the hatred of strangers, natural enough to be sure, but also the hatred of Frenchmen, ungrateful or deluded.

This was what broke my heart; this was what made me ashamed of my compatriots. I asked myself whether there was any class of society that had not benefited by his presence.

Although his chief purpose had always been to uplift the masses, and to strengthen the institutions which assured them a true independence, at the same time those rich and titled men who had plotted his downfall were also indebted to him for their very lives, for having made peace between them and the working classes and for the sense of security and prosperity which sprang from that peace.

Was it out of gratitude that they allied themselves with foreign interests in order to overthrow a power whose absence one day they would regret, and which in a sense was their chief protector?

Dawn often found me sunk in these melancholy thoughts, and I remember how any sudden noise would startle me, causing me to fear for the life of the man who had accomplished so much that was good, so much that I found pleasure in remembering in those last tragic hours. I felt that I was still dreaming or that some violent fever had shaken the reason of mankind.

CHAPTER XVII
THE RETURN OF THE BOURBONS. ON THE WAY INTO EXILE (JUNE 29, 1815-JULY 24, 1815)

Public Opinion—The Chamber of Deputies—The Evacuation of Paris —The Queen Is Not Safe in the Rue Cerutti—She Moves to the Rue Taitbout, Then Moves Back—The Emperor of Russia and Hortense—The Queen Is Ordered to Leave France—Her Departure—An Incident at Dijon —Ai Poligny—Into Exile.

ON my return home I found everyone alarmed as to what had happened to me. People feared I might even have been taken prisoner by the enemy.

My children had remained in hiding in a private family. Paris still seemed fairly quiet. Only the upper classes were excited. I, satisfied that I had done my duty to the end, was prepared to wait further events with courage and resignation.

Our troops reformed in the neighborhood of Paris. The army wished to resist under the walls of the capital and save our national honor. The Chamber of Deputies was busy drawing up a constitution, and the Provisional Government meanwhile negotiated with the foreign powers, seeking to prevent the shedding of any more French blood and to insure at least the country's position as a nation.

The women I knew met every morning at my house. Each of them had a different idea of what should be done and kept me informed of what Paris was saying. They were all excited and nervous, while I astonished them by my calm.

Yet this was easily understandable. Their futures were undecided; mine was settled. I had done no harm, there was no favor I wished to ask for, my only desire was to withdraw from society, and I imagined that nothing was simpler.

I listened to without a struggle to the foreign invader and unless we were prepared to offer some sort of resistance, I felt that all discussions were vain and futile.

Consequently, I listened to each person's opinions with the completest indifference. I remember, however, that this letter of Fouché was written to combat vehemently any idea of accepting the Duc d'Orleans.

He cleverly pointed out that the Duke's accession to the throne would result in new misfortunes for the country generally, and that it would be better to accept, after all, the elder branch of the Bourbons.

The letter also stated that Napoleon II was the only ruler who could assure the prosperity of France and European peace. One day a Monsieur Courtois, a former member of the republican party, called at my house. I did not know who he was.

He came as delegate from the colonels commanding the various regiments assembled at La Villette. Their plan was to kidnap the members of the Provisional Government, suspected of being in touch with the Bourbons, and summon the Emperor back to defend his capital.

Monsieur Courtois had been sent to see me on behalf of the army to find out if the Emperor had already actually left. I assured my visitor he had, and at the same time did my best to combat an enterprise which might lead to disastrous results. I knew the integrity of the Duc de Vicence, the patriotism of Carnot, and doubted if even Fouché would betray his country.

The Emperor having left there was no other man capable of gaining the support of all political parties and saving France. At such moments the gravest danger is that of civic unrest. Without a leader, without unity of purpose what can one accomplish? I heard later that the Emperor had stopped at Rambouillet and spent the night. Was he aware of what the army was planning?

Did he expect to be summoned, to be appealed to, to be forced into an attempt to save the country? I fancy so, but at that time, I believed he was already a long way off.

The troops, who were discontented with what was going on, received orders to pass around the capital but not enter it.

Stories of pillaging were spread about so as to alarm the Parisians. They were made to believe that French soldiers, whose only idea was to combat the enemy, were more dangerous than the enemy himself.

To refute these slanders the generals on their way to the other side of Paris marched through it from end to end in spite of the order not to do so. Their march was an entirely orderly one. All the trained soldiers declared that the Prussians had committed a grave mistake in marching toward Versailles, and that it would be easy to defeat them by making an attack from Saint Denis.

The government, still believing its negotiations would be successful and imagining that conditions were the same as in 1814, watched unconcernedly the approach of an enemy who, it thought, shared its delusions.

The habit of considering oneself a great nation gives a country a haughty attitude, which it retains in spite of what may happen. Yet if it lacks the energy to defend its rights, this attitude is nothing but an empty sham. If the Chamber, still occupied with the constitution, desired to imitate the stoicism of the Roman Senate it should have also been prepared to imitate its model by receiving in triumph a Consul who had been defeated because he still believed in his country's prowess.

The memory of the Emperor's exile, forced on him because he had failed and because the enemy insisted upon it, will always shame those who witnessed it.

These liberals, these energetic patriots whom France should honor since they defended so courageously its rights and its liberties, lost their cause because they separated it from that of the one

man who could have saved them. To be sure the position was a critical one. Those in office found themselves confronted either with the necessity of accepting again absolute authority or surrendering their Country to the foreign invader.

They would have done better to place their confidence in the promises of the victorious warrior. It was the desire for freedom that made them enslave themselves. I have heard it said often enough, and I cannot deny the fact, that the authority of a legal Constitution is preferable to that of a single man, but at this moment the memory of all the great things the Emperor had accomplished filled my mind to the exclusion of everything else.

Had he not rescued the country from anarchy and chaos, established a throne founded on the essential equality of man, increased France's fame abroad, reestablished its finances, religion, industry and social order? Had he not accomplished a host of other glorious and useful acts which the nation had benefited by because they were the product of his genius?

Yet the man who had done so much was forsaken. He and his few faithful friends found themselves exposed to all sorts of dangers, including the schemes of revenge which the enemy might entertain.

Here, indeed, was food for thought. When I yielded to my emotions, I accused the French of being ungrateful, unjust, and unstable in their affections.

At such times I recalled with acute sorrow the day when, still quite young, I had read a "Life of Hannibal." I was hurt and indignant over his sad fate. The Emperor—he was Consul at the time—said to me, "That is what happens to almost all great men." My mother and I exchanged glances, for already he was rather great himself.

Our position became dangerous. Royalist exiles began to reenter the capital in disguise. Monsieur de Vitrolles had been released from prison by the Duc d'Ortrante. General Exelmans, having heard of it, caused him to be again arrested and confined in a room at Vaugirard, where his troops were stationed.

The General went in to Paris to spend the evening. When he returned Monsieur de Vitrolles had again escaped. Monsieur Hyde de Neuville compromised in the affair of the infernal machine, but escaping, thanks to the help of the Baron de Vaux, was now hiding in Paris.

He called on Monsieur de Vaux, and told him he would see that I was not harmed if I would sign, and persuade my friends to sign, a paper urging all the generals I knew to go over to the Bourbons.

He displayed a list already filled with the names of prominent marshals and generals who had agreed to do so. I replied that everyone was free to do as he pleased, that I would not undertake to influence anyone's opinion or actions, that I had no favors to ask in my own behalf, and that I would not sign.

Meanwhile the French troops were passing through Paris without provoking the least disorder. Many officers came to see me in the evening.

I had never seen such a martial spirit as that which animated the younger officers at a time when many of those higher in rank were already making peace with the Bourbons.

These older officers considered that the return of the Bourbons to the throne was inevitable, but that whoever the King might be it was the foreigners who were really to be feared. I pitied men whose personal interests blinded them to such an extent.

I regretted that I was not a man, for I felt that all was not yet lost. If France only knew how to take advantage of the ardor of all these youths, it could at least defend its national interests and not throw itself blindly on the mercy of the conquerors. But what could a woman do?

Arouse people's imagination, lead them into dangers which she could neither share nor control? I should have felt that such an action would be not only rash but criminal. (I was not a queen in France. I was only obeying my impulse as a woman and as a daughter of France. Therefore, I forced myself to listen to all sorts of plans, without encouraging the policy of defense which I felt was so urgently needed, but which, since it was in accordance with my personal interests, I was the more reluctant to advise.)

At the same time when the Duc de Bassano came to inform me that it had been suggested that the seat of the government be transferred to Blois, I warmly approved this measure.

Everything seemed to me preferable to surrender without conditions to the enemy. From Blois, at least, surrounded by faithful troops it would be possible to obtain certain concessions. But none of these plans came to anything, and I heard nothing further about the matter.

General Exelmans, who was ready to take risks in spite of the orders to be cautious, beat the Prussians near Versailles.

In this engagement Colonel de Briquerville, whom I had seen the day before, was seriously wounded. In spite of the pain he was in he wrote me telling me to reassure people who were alarmed and to do what I could to prevent Paris from capitulating.

I had nothing to do with the matter. Meanwhile the Prussians drew nearer. Malmaison was almost sacked. It was thought the Emperor was there. Young Monsieur de Brack, who was in command at the bridge of Neuilly, was obliged to charge several times in order to save this house which we had so recently left.

It was his courage and devotion that saved the precious objects I had left behind. I admired him enough to be glad to accept this favor from him. A capitulation, the terms of which were not fully executed, surrendered Paris to the Allies and forced the army to withdraw toward the Loire.

I was urged to go there also. Monsieur de Brack came to offer to conduct me there escorted by his entire regiment and promised to protect me from all possible dangers. But was I the sort of woman who follows an army?

It was only from the allied sovereigns that I could hope to obtain the means for passing through their lines without difficulty, in order to reach Switzerland where I wished to live. The English ruled Paris.

The army had left. Louis XVIII was approaching, and still people clung to the emblems of the Empire. The outburst of enthusiasm for the royal cause, which was to have become also that of the nation, failed to materialize.

People believed, or said they believed, that it was I alone who was responsible for its non-appearance. Consequently, the royalists and the foreigners hated and feared me.

Some excuse had to be found by which so many people's wounded pride could explain the silence that greeted the return of the Bourbons.

The King was at Saint Denis. I was walking about my garden when I saw cabs go by filled with wild looking men who, when they recognized me, made threatening gestures and shouted insults.

They seemed on the point of getting out and attacking me. The Duc d'Ortrante warned me that he was doing everything he could to protect me, but that I was in serious danger, that I must be very careful as people were more actively hostile to me than ever.

This was why the day following the King's entry into Paris, some young members of his body-guard, having distinguished themselves by wrecking a café, set out toward my house, doubtless to do the same there.

The police and the National Guard managed to disperse them. Without further hesitation I left my home and rented another residence.

I did this under an assumed name, not wishing to compromise any of my friends. During the interval between the landing of the Emperor and his arrival in Paris I had not felt worried about this, for hope of his success had allowed me to believe I should later be able to reward an act of faithfulness; but now my presence could only be dangerous.

I therefore shut myself up for several days alone with my children, and received no visitors. The Prince of Schwarzenberg having established his military headquarters at my house, I felt I could return to it in safety.

I was convinced that I no longer had anything to fear from the royalists, but their hatred of me still continued. If workmen in the suburbs made seditious remarks, I was alleged to have paid them to do so.

Red carnations were at that time Considered my emblem. I was recognized going about on foot in the most out-of-the-way corners of the city.

In short, the defeated cause that had been abandoned by all, that lacked an army or support of any kind, still made the armed hosts of Europe tremble; and it was upon a woman that the leagued sovereigns fixed their eyes.

The army had reassembled beside the Loire. Monsieur de Flahaut was already there. Monsieur de La Bedoyère called to say good-by to me. He could not bear to be separated from his wife, who had been entirely won over to his ideas.

When I expressed my astonishment that he was still in Paris he answered: "You are right. I must not allow myself to be captured. I should be reprieved on account of my wife's family. I do not want to owe them anything. France is liable to suffer grievous wounds, but all her defenders are not dead, and I wish to join them in order to help free her from her enemies."

The Emperor of Russia reentered Paris. The protection he had offered me in the past was now more necessary than it had ever been. He was the only man I could hope would defend me, and although it would have been natural enough for me to ask him to do so, I felt too downcast, too broken-hearted by my country's misfortunes to receive him again as a friend.

Indeed, I hesitated whether I should receive him at all. My doubt did not last long. He did not make the slightest inquiry about me, left me all alone in the midst of the dangers which surrounded me, and seemed to wish to humiliate me.

One day, when he and his staff had come to see the Prince of Schwarzenberg, he did not even come up to my apartment, where he had been so eager to call in the past. Instead of being offended by this disdainful attitude I felt sorry for him.

Thus, the same man whose attentions had at one time involved me in so many difficulties now left me at the mercy of any incident that might occur.

He pitilessly abandoned me to the attacks of those against whom he might have been my sole defender.

I could not help feeling for him, and regretting that political matters had so changed his generous feelings, but his conduct could not humiliate me in the least.

My role seemed the nobler of the two. In a very short time, I had improved my knowledge of politics. I began to be able to appreciate the truth, to recognize when a cause was just and right.

My own cause, its grandeur, and the misfortunes which pursued it rendered it still dearer and more sacred to me. While I maintained an attitude of dignified isolation, I could not be indifferent to

certain phrases of a conversation which the young Polish woman Madame Walewska had with the Emperor of Russia and which she repeated to me.

She had been asking him to take care of Madame Mere, of whom the Allies had not been sufficiently considerate. "What do you want me to do?" he had asked.

"Surely I cannot be expected to keep on bothering about all the members of that family. See what happened in the case of Queen Hortense. I treated her as a friend in 1814. And it is she who is the cause of all the misfortunes which have since befallen France."

Did he really believe what he said? Or was it an excuse for his not seeing me and for his attitude toward me?

Whatever may have been the cause of his making such charges against me they aroused my indignation.

It was inconceivable that I should be accused of having provoked all our disasters, I who had never done anything to harm a single Frenchman.

Was it because I had cared for the Emperor during the last days he spent at Malmaison? I was proud to have done so.

Who would dare blame me for my conduct? I gathered up all the letters I had received from the Emperor of Russia and, sending them back to him, I wrote that since he had taught me to doubt the sincerity of the expressions of friendship and admiration, they contained I no longer wished to keep them in my possession.

He immediately dispatched Monsieur Boutilaguine to see me, with a rather severe reply concerning the part I had played in politics, which he said was unworthy of a woman. The Emperor cited as proof of his charges the note I had left with Monsieur Boutilaguine. He added that my remarks about peace in my conversation with him were presumably due to a simulated hostility toward the Emperor Napoleon. The Emperor of Russia had mistaken my general dislike of rank and position for an indication of a special spirit of opposition toward the man who had conferred them on me. But his minister addressed me in quite other terms.

He spoke of the suspicions against me which had been sown and fostered in his master's mind and of the admiration with which the latter still regarded me. He added that the King of France had begged the Emperor of Russia on his knees not to see me.

I confess that the idea of the King of France imploring the Russian Emperor on his knees not to go to see a woman made me smile. "The Emperor's ministers," continued Monsieur Boutilaguine, "and the princes who are his allies constantly approach him for the protection he offered you and your family. When you returned his letters, it wounded him deeply.

Nevertheless, your Majesty need not worry; everything will quiet down in a little while."

"All that I ask is permission to leave," I answered. "The only things I need are passports." But do you not owe it to the memory of his friendship, which you have just offended, to send him a brief reply? And should not this reply be written in such a way that he can show it to his advisors?"

"Very well, then I shall write to the Emperor. I still desire his respect and wish him to know the truth. As for what his advisors or anybody else may think, I am quite indifferent to that."

I did write a long letter, in which I described in detail some of the causes for the discontent of the French—the only reason for the Emperor's unaided return. I denied the charge that I had done anything toward it myself.

I admitted I had made a mistake, that of remaining in France in 1814, and of forgetting the bitterness of the hatred which surrounded me.

I corrected his impression that I was unhappy because I had done my duty toward the man who had been as a father to me. I ended by saying that I was about to withdraw and lead a secluded life, far from society and its unjust criticisms, and that I pitied him for being obliged to remain on one of those lofty social pinnacles to which truth can never attain.

I had another letter from him, containing about the same ideas as the first. In it he who had been the first to inform me of the King's enmity toward me and to say I need not pay a visit of thanks now wrote that having been allowed by the King's kindness to remain in France I should not have presented myself at the court of Emperor Napoleon.

I felt that such illogical reasoning did not even deserve a reply, and I made none. A newspaper stated I had called on the Emperor of Russia. I considered such a remark insulting, for I should have felt I was committing an unworthy deed to go to see him when he was acting as an oppressor of my family and my country.

I was anxiously seeking means to deny this report when denial of it came from another source before I could do so. The day after the first note had appeared, a second one was published, saying in a haughty and official tone that it was not true that I had been received by the Emperor of Russia.

This was a signal for all those animosities which the arrival of my former defender had silenced momentarily to break out anew. Everyone felt it his duty and his privilege to condemn me. Moreover, the hand of a woman who had once been a friend, not satisfied with striking me herself, armed others against me.

Madame de Vitrolles headed my enemies and went about everywhere spreading the most absurd pieces of scandal. Her purpose was doubtless to revenge herself for once having sought and obtained my help, and to make other people forget the fact.

Monsieur de Vitrolles, although his wife when she was seeking my protection had assured me of his neutrality in regard to me, now printed my name in the *Moniteur* on the list of those accused of being responsible for France's misfortunes. Even the police went so far as to bribe one of my mother's former servants, now employed by the aides-de-camp of the Prince of Schwarzenberg, to relate the most filthy stories about me.

My children still remained hidden in the house I had rented. My sole thought was how to have them reach a spot where they would be safe. Such a place was only to be found outside of France, and I did not know by what means to get them out of the country. The idea of having them go to Switzerland alone with their nurse and a valet de chambre occurred to me.

They might be passed off as the children of these servants. Monsieur Gabriel Delessert, who had a Swiss servant, managed to secure a passport bearing the name of this man and his wife. He sent it to me. But renewed alarms the reasons for which I was unaware of, caused the allied sovereigns to decide I must leave Paris immediately.

Monsieur Boutiaguine, greatly alarmed, came to tell me that numerous groups of men wearing red carnations were in the habit of assembling at night on the boulevard.

I was accused of instigating this movement. Monsieur Decazes, at that time prefect of police, issued an order forbidding my remaining any longer in Paris. Monsieur Muffling, the governor of Paris on behalf of the Allies, sent for Monsieur de Vaux, informed him of the danger I was in and of the fact that it would be necessary for me to have an armed escort as far as the gates.

He feared an attempt would be made to assassinate me and did not wish the blame for such a crime to fall on the Allies.

All the bureaus of the police were quite anxious to have me die, but would not kill me themselves. This made their position a rather delicate one. I refused any escort except that of one of the Prince of Schwarzenberg's aides-de-camp to accompany me through the entire Austrian army.

My passports for Switzerland were sent me, bearing the signatures of all the French and foreign authorities. This encouraged me to have my children come back to me. With this protection I felt they were in less danger with me than they would have been elsewhere.

At the moment I was entering my carriage I received word that at a meeting held at the Pavilion de Fiore orders about me similar to those given Monsieur de Maubreuil regarding the Queen of Westphalia in 1814 had been issued.

Members of the royal body-guard were said to have left ahead of me with instructions to ambush me and I was advised not to take any valuables with me.

Impressed by the similarity between the two orders, with which as I have already related, I was familiar, it was natural that I should feel alarmed for the lives of those who were so dear to me. But

what could I do? If I sent my children off alone just after they had returned to my house, they would be in danger of being followed and kidnaped without having the protection which the presence of an Austrian officer offered me.

Thus, it was clear that they would still be safest beside their mother. The need of protecting them, the conviction that I could rely on no one but myself had stimulated all my faculties and strung me up to a high degree of nervous tension.

I seemed joyous rather than terrified, indifferent rather than deeply moved, at what was taking place. My brain, alone was allowed to express itself. I had stifled the impulses of my heart, which might have led me to give way to one of those moments of weakness so fatal in times of danger or uncertainty.

All the members of my house-hold assembled to bid me farewell. I received them in a perfectly calm manner, as though I were to return the next day. I know this attitude was a surprise to them, but I dreaded giving way to my emotion.

Consequently, I hastened to drive off, accompanied by my children, abandoning myself to the course of events whatever they might be. As we crossed the boulevards, I noticed at intervals men on horseback.

I heard afterwards (it was the Prussian governor of Paris who told it to Monsieur de Vaux) that this was done in order to protect me. But there was no sign of disorder as I passed. The first night I spent at Bercy, in the house of Madame de Nicolay, who had placed it at my disposal.

The next morning, I found myself in the midst of the enemies' troops. Another carriage was changing horses at the same time. An Englishman, not knowing who I was, said to me: "Madame, I have just been stopped by a French regiment of irregular troops. They robbed me. You are in danger."

"They certainly were not French," I replied promptly. "Such a thing is impossible." Hearing these remarks, the aide-de-camp, who was in the second carriage with Monsieur de Marmol, suggested he buy a pair of pistols and come and sit beside the coachman of my carriage.

He pointed out all the risks I was exposed to in the midst of these undisciplined troops. "As long as they are French, I have no reason to fear them," I replied. The idea that fighting might take place under my very eyes made me tremble and seemed to me far more terrifying than the sight of regiments in disorder which my name alone would have sufficed to recall to a sense of their duties.

Hence without letting the aide-de-camp know I gave orders to my valet de chambre, who rode beside me, to have my carriage leave the posting-house as soon as it had been reharnessed, without waiting for the second in which were seated Monsieur de Marmol and the Austrian officer. Thus, I drove off first unattended and with my two children.

I preferred not to have a foreign officer with me at the spot where we were told we might encounter the irregular troops. Fortunately, all we encountered were a few soldiers in distress, to whom I gave some money.

I learned at the next posting-station that the troops whose presence had caused alarm were on their way to rejoin the army on the Loire. Meeting an Englishman on the way, they considered him fair game, but all the harm they had done him was to make him pay a ransom of fifty Louis to buy drinks for the men.

The peasants who told me this story laughed about it and considered it a fair piece of retaliation against the enemy.

The third day of my journey, as I was about to enter Dijon, a horseman stationed on the road and carrying a pistol came up and stopped my carriage. He was an Austrian outpost. The aide-de-camp gave his name, and we proceeded on our way.

As I was going up the stairs of the inn at Dijon, I heard a woman who was looking out through a half-open door exclaim, "There she is!" I paid no attention to this. The aide-de-camp, Monsieur le Comte Edouard de Woyna, presented the Austrian captain in command of the outpost to me.

The captain offered to give me military escort. This I declined, not wishing to have any special honors shown me. After Monsieur de Woyna had gone out to see the city and while I was talking with the Austrian captain, three French officers entered my private drawing-room. They were pale and evidently profoundly impressed with the importance and danger of their mission, which was that of arresting a woman and her two children.

"Madame," they said, "our orders are that you are not to leave this spot." "Very well, gentlemen, then I shall remain here," I replied quite coolly. "Who gives orders here, I should like to know," exclaimed the Austrian officer.

"I am in command. Madame is free to leave whenever she pleases." On hearing this answer, that of a person in authority uttered in a tone he was only too well entitled to use the French officers withdrew. They tried to provoke a hostile demonstration against me outside the inn.

My courage nearly failed me. Was it possible? Enemies taking my part, Frenchmen acting as my foes. For the pleasure of persecuting me they had placed themselves in a humiliating position and allowed themselves to be reminded that they had been defeated.

This painful impression was soon banished by shouts of "Long live the King!" which echoed under my windows. The crowd was composed of old men, children and many society women of Dijon. Monsieur de Woyna when he returned sent out a couple of Austrians to disperse the throng. He did this although I asked him not to, saying: "I do not mind hearing these shouts. At least this time no one will say I paid for them." I must say, moreover, that the working classes seemed to sympathize with me and looked derisively at the fury displayed by my enemies.

A young man of the royal body-guard named Monsieur de Nansouty had arrived at Dijon the day before. He was the head of the movement. He did not leave the inn but walked up and down before it, with a long sword which he let rattle as he walked as though this conferred a more martial air on its owner, and as though this noise indicated the respect with which the owner of such a weapon should be treated.

His companions kept guard over my carriage and drank together in one of the ante-rooms. Their remarks were at times most alarming. Consequently, Monsieur de Woyna, Monsieur de Marmol and my servants were on the alert. The Austrian advance guard left the city, their places being taken by another detachment of the same troops.

Immediately the young men hastened to the officer in command of the new detachment to inform him that, in accordance with orders issued by the Court of France, I was to be held as prisoner, and that a Frenchman in disguise, since he was dressed as an Austrian, had prevented them from carrying out these instructions.

The commanding officer, much embarrassed, called at the inn. He turned out to be a personal friend of Monsieur de Woyna and embraced him instead of placing him under arrest. It was agreed that the Austrian troops should use force, if necessary, to insure my passage through the town. Monsieur, de Nansouty declared to Monsieur de Woyna, "I shall dispatch a messenger to Paris. Your behavior shall be known. You have prevented me from carrying out my orders. The idea of letting a woman escape who did us so much harm. What a terrible thing to do!"

A notice declaring that I was a person who had brought misfortune on France was posted in all the streets. My position became every instant more critical.

Fortunately, the French General Liger-Belair, who commanded a division, arrived during the night. Monsieur de Woyna hastened to see him and explained his mission. The French General was himself embarrassed to know how to restrain such violent passions and check the men, who seemed to have received positive instructions.

He and Monsieur de Woyna, who was resolved to use the Austrian troops if necessary, arranged that a review should be held at the same time as my departure.

In this way the royalist officers and the members of the garde d'honneur would be forced to give up their surveillance of my movements and return to their regular posts. Monsieur de Nansouty, member of the royal body-guard, who had just arrived from Paris and consequently had no staff appointment, and who doubtless was the person against whom I had been warned before leaving Paris, was the only one to remain behind to witness my departure.

He could not conceal his disappointment to see his prey thus escape him. As I came downstairs to enter the carriage, escorted by Monsieur de Woyna between a double row of Austrians, Monsieur de

Nansouty again reproached the Austrian aide-de-camp for having prevented the royalists from revenging themselves on me.

Four Austrians on horseback acted as my escort. The townspeople silently looked at me with an affectionate interest, and on the door-steps of several shops I even saw some people hold out their arms toward me in unrestrainable emotion.

At Dole a more energetic demonstration in my favor took place. A crowd surrounded my carriage throwing me red carnations, and men and women wept as I passed.

"Ain't it shameful" (c'est-y pas en-levant), exclaimed one of them dressed as a peasant, "that the good leave and the wicked stay?"

Another came up beside my carriage and asked if I was treated as a prisoner, if the Austrian officer was kind to me. I hastened to assure him I was quite satisfied with the care that was being taken of me and that the presence of the officer was most useful to me.

Thus, at Dijon he had defended me and here I helped protect him. Near Poligny I met a group of officers who had just surrendered a town. They surrounded my carriage and wept.

Several proposed to accompany me, but I declined. I attempted to calm them and show them the necessity of accepting the melancholy end.

"Yes, we must submit," said a man standing at the gate of a farm and wearing the blouse of a wagoner, "but our day will come, and then it will be the awakening of a lion."

At last I reached the frontier. I was about to leave the soil of France. Formerly, in the days of my prosperity, I should have wept for the country I was leaving behind.

Now that I had exile forced upon me I was almost glad to leave. In the bitterness of my grief I considered France ungrateful and unjust.

She had insulted, after having deserted, the man who had done so much for her.

She repulsed those who loved her so dearly. I felt an atmosphere of hatred and of revenge all about me. I felt I could breathe more freely on foreign soil. I was wrong. The passions, the forces which were hostile to me were such as neither forgive nor forget, nor do they ever diminish.

Their animosity has pursued me everywhere. I soon realized I was wrong in accusing my country. She too was suffering, she too was a victim of those fears and jealousies which had been aroused by her years of power.

Everywhere one felt the hand of the enemy; everywhere his clutch was tightening. Having understood this, I admit it became agreeable to me to limit my complaints to the conduct of foreigners toward me. I became proud of having my share in the persecutions which were inflicted on a great nation, but which could not subdue it.

CHAPTER XVIII
THE WANDERING QUEEN (JULY 25, 1815-DECEMBER 7, 1815)

At Geneva The Emperor Napoleon's Mother and Cardinal Fesch—The Duc and Duchesse de Bassano—Madame de Staël at Aix—Monsieur de Flahaut—The Austrians at Chambery—Murat—The Letters of Monsieur de Flahaut—The Departure of Prince Napoleon Louis—Monsieur de Flahaut's Reply—The Queen Wishes to Leave Aix—At Prigny—At Baden—Letter from Hortense to Eugene—Arrival at Constance.

I ARRIVED at Geneva and settled in the suburb of Secheron, close to my little country house, which was not yet furnished. How happy I should have been to enjoy the rest that this quiet spot seemed to offer me.

I already imagined myself installed there. I thought of how I would arrange the house inside and out. No hateful passions would dare enter. My lot would be completely calm, completely peaceful. Alas, this dream vanished swiftly.

I could not take my mind off my cruel uncertainty as to the Emperor's fate or what was happening to the army of the Loire, that last hope of a defeated country.

My imagination kept conjuring up visions of the dangers which I felt menaced those dear to me. Is the egotist not sometimes to be envied the person so wrapped up in himself that he never cares about what may befall others?

A thousand fears cannot disturb his peace of mind as long as he himself is safe. And yet how well-founded were my alarms! I learned what had befallen the Emperor.

How grievous it was that he should have escaped the enemies who were leagued against him only to fall into the clutches of the most stubborn of them all! Fortune had saved his life only to lead him into captivity!

I read also on the list of those who had been killed or exiled the names of my friends. My own name was not among them, but I was in almost as great a danger as my friends were. Although I had arrived at Geneva with passports signed by the allied powers and even by the King of France, I was not allowed either to remain there or to go on.

Since it was impossible for me to go back, what was I to do? Monsieur de Woyna addressed himself to the local authorities at Geneva. Speaking on behalf of his sovereign he declared that they were responsible for my safety and that I must be allowed to wait there at least until he had received an answer from Paris.

He came to see me to explain this new complication. I received the news with an apparent air of calm which surprised him so much that he said to Monsieur de Marmol that Frenchwomen did not take anything seriously.

My life was in danger. He was not sure what steps to take to safeguard it. Nevertheless, I could still smile. Informed of his displeasure I sent for him again, thanked him for all he had done for me and advised him in future to learn to judge Frenchwomen better and not mistake resignation for thoughtlessness or frivolity.

Cardinal Fesch and his sister, the Emperor's mother, arrived at Geneva. Their passports were for Italy. The local authorities forced Madame Mere to continue her journey in spite of her advanced age and her misfortunes.

These misfortunes had not, however, broken her spirit, for she replied to an Austrian aide-de-camp who accompanied her "Well, sir, in spite of the unrelenting animosity of the allied rulers toward Emperor Napoleon I am prouder to be his mother than I should be to be the mother of your Emperor, the Emperor of Russia and all the kings in the world."

I displayed my sincere affection for her, and the memory of what I had been able to do for the Emperor at Malmaison had, I believed, already made her approve of me. From then on she never forgot that I was one of her children, But I did not even have the satisfaction of being able to help her by accompanying her on her journey.

My fate remained undecided, to be settled by anyone who wished to harm me. A man in great distress, who had been robbed of his belongings by hostile soldiers and reduced to a state of the most abject misery, came to see me.

He had been seeking to escape that death to which he had been doomed by the inclusion of his name on the first list of those who were to be executed. Now utterly discouraged, he was about to go back to France and give himself up. It was General Ameil. He appeared before me in the last stages of despair. Knowing that I was watched I feared he might be arrested if he continued with me.

I remembered the passport bearing a Swiss name which I had intended to use for my children, and I hastened to give it to him, along with other aid. I thus saved his life and I was so pleased at having done so that I momentarily forgot my own difficult situation. I also received the visit of the Duc de Bassano and the Duchess. The Duchess, sensitive and temperamental as she was, could not bear the idea of seeing me living like this, abandoned by all, alone with my children and almost a prisoner of the Swiss government.

She forgot her own lot in pitying mine. Finally, in response to the urgent request of the French Ambassador, Monsieur Auguste de Talleyrand, repeated orders from the Swiss Diet obliged me to leave Swiss territory in spite of passports signed by the ambassador's royal master.

Mademoiselle Cochelet, whom I had left in Paris for a few days to give her time to attend to her private business affairs, now joined me together with Abbe Bertrand. Mademoiselle Cochelet left her family and her country in order to devote herself to me.

She was the only one of my attendants who remained for me, as I would not have dreamed of asking any of my ladies in waiting to accompany me; they were too attached to France by bonds of wealth, social position or family.

Driven out of Switzerland I did not know in what direction I should be allowed to turn my steps. Monsieur de Woyna, who did not himself know what advice to give me, proposed that he conduct me back to France and leave me at Bourg until he had been able to go to Paris and secure further instructions.

While in this dilemma I decided to go to Aix and wait there for my fate to be decided. I should have liked before leaving to see Madame de Stael, who was living not far away.

I knew she had said, speaking of the Emperor: "I cannot understand the conduct of this man whom I had considered great. He leaves his troops, he tries to escape. What a pitiful ending!"

Perhaps a few moments' conversation would have been enough to convince her that he had never been greater than when fortune failed him, but the dignity of my present position made it impossible to make any advances toward her.

Moreover, what does all the reasoning in the world amount to if one judges in accordance with one's political bias? Then too I felt that Napoleon could get along very well without the approval of Madame de Stael.

I had chosen Aix with the idea that some memories of me might have remained there. The loss of my friend had made the spot a dear and sacred one to me. It would awake sad recollections, but I did not shun melancholy.

I had a hospital there; I had helped the poor and this wins one more gratitude than helping the rich. I realized this by the way the townspeople welcomed me.

Once more I felt I was on friendly soil. Monsieur de Woyna left me to return to Paris and inquire what the Powers had decided in regard to my future. Monsieur Appel, one of the Prince of Schwarzenberg's aides-de-camp, who had joined us with my other carriages, remained with me.

Young Comte de Woyna was remarkably handsome and was an extremely fine conversationalist. Monsieur de Metternich had trained him to be a diplomat, and he had great natural talents for this career.

He was able to act any part, but as he was too young as yet to know how to conceal his feelings, his vanity caused him to show off that ability by which he hoped to make his fortune.

The choice of him as my escort was a sufficient indication of the Austrian policy.

Indeed, Monsieur de Metternich had already said in Paris, "The young man who will act as Queen Hortense's escort resembles the hero of a romantic love story."

Although his pupil might have been the hero of a novel, should he have forgotten that I was not that type of heroine?

Perhaps the Powers considered this a good means of luring me into Austria. This idea has occurred to me since, but I have never had any direct evidence of the fact.

Consequently, I may be wrong.

"Madame," said Monsieur de Woyna as he was leaving, "I understand now how mistaken the general opinion of you is. People do not know that you possess this spirit of resignation, this ineffable gentleness, which I have been able to judge myself. For your own good I shall not say what I think of you. People would declare I had fallen under your spell. You can trust me. I shall wind up your business affairs and I shall return to conduct you where you wish to retire."

As a matter of fact, I heard some time afterwards that he was taking my part with much zeal but in a way which amused me greatly. He told everybody that I was incapable of having done what I was accused of, that I was not nearly clever enough to have done so. I considered this expedient an excellent one and was grateful to him for it. The Piedmontese troops were occupying Savoy. The day after my arrival at Aix a Piedmontese officer, rather coarse in his appearance, appeared at my house with orders not to let me out of his sight. He insisted in observing these instructions with such a surly obstinacy that Monsieur Appel lost his temper and was about to demand an explanation for his conduct.

He thought it best, however, to refer instead to the officer in command at Chambery. He called on the latter and explained that as long as I was under his protection, he would not allow such treatment. The Piedmontese commander was profuse in his apologies, threw all the blame on his subordinate and at once recalled him.

Freed of this surveillance I was also indebted at the time to the protection of Monsieur Finot, whom the King of France had just reappointed prefect of Chambery.

Monsieur Finot was on the alert for those dangers by which the emissaries of the royalists sought to ensnare my footsteps. His watchful attention contributed a great deal to my peace of mind. The prefect was related to the Duchesse de Bassano.

He had kept his post in 1814. When the Emperor landed from Elba Monsieur Finot remembered only the last oath of allegiance he had sworn, and returned to Paris without doing anything to prevent the Emperor's advance, but without giving it any material support.

The Duchesse de Bassano with her customary impetuosity refused to receive him. I took his part. He remembered this, and when he returned to his post the opportunity of making himself useful to me presented itself.

One evening, to my utter surprise, whom should I see enter my drawing-room but Monsieur de Flahaut!

The Army of the Loire had capitulated and been disbanded by Marshal Macdonald. Monsieur de La Bedoyère, yielding to a desire to see his wife once more, had risked a journey to Paris, where he had not escaped the snares of the police, who had been waiting for him for a long time.

He was arrested. Monsieur Lavallette, who could not believe that he was guilty of a crime unless it was one which all France had committed at the same time, had refused to leave his wife, who was about to have a child.

He had been thrown into prison. Monsieur de Flahaut had left his cousin La Bedoyère on arriving in Paris. He came to Aix for the purpose of putting his life at my disposal.

I pointed out to him that my present position was such as to compromise him, and that at the same time his presence would injure my reputation. It would be advisable, therefore, for him to withdraw until the time came when, more firmly established somewhere, I could again surround myself with my friends.

He realized the necessity of making this sacrifice and decided to take up his residence some little distance off, but where he could hear from me regularly.

Although this was scarcely a separation I was troubled by forebodings, and our parting was more painful than any of those which had preceded it.

A few days later the newspapers referred to this trip of Monsieur de Flahaut, and in political circles it was spoken of as an example of the way in which I was surrounded by a large number of officers from the Army of the Loire, attracted by the prominence of my position. My formidable staff was actually composed of Monsieur de Marmol, with a weak constitution and lacking in decision, and Abbe Bertrand, whose profession and temperament were not of a precisely martial character.

The troops at Lyons were commanded by the Austrian General Roxmans. He sent me a letter by one of his aides-de-camp.

In it he placed himself at my service, as long as I remained on his territory. He felt that he must see I did not seek to escape. His real purpose, however, was to warn the Austrian aide-de-camp Monsieur Appel that emissaries from Paris were preparing to attempt to assassinate me and my children.

The General's aide-de-camp urged Monsieur Appel to redouble his vigilance. As I had every reason to believe that General Roxmans was correct, and as furthermore the events that were taking place throughout southern France justified his alarm only too well, it would have been natural for me to be terrified at the news of this danger. But I could not believe in the existence of a plot against me, and

in spite of the incident at Dijon I was unable to conceive that my enemies were capable of planning to murder a woman and her two children.

Therefore, I still remained calm. Terrible news suddenly reached us. Monsieur de La Bedoyère had been shot. Another friend lost to us. No one had pleaded his cause. In the past we had not thus abandoned the Rivieres and the Polignacs, and La Bedoyère, at least, had never tried to assassinate anyone as had been the case with them.

Unfortunate young man! How high his ideals had been, how ardent his patriotism! How devoted he was to his country, how unselfish in his affections! By his death France lost one of her best citizens and I a true friend. I felt myself guilty of having scarcely replied to his generous sentiments toward me. Had he not well deserved that I should bestow all my confidence unreservedly on him? Thus, well-founded self-reproaches mingled with my regrets.

About the same time, I heard of the death of Murat. What an end for a man who had been king! What an example for the masses! Gloom seemed to surround me.

The only means by which I managed at times to dissipate my low spirits was to visit my Sisters of Charity. (The sight of the suffering of others calms one's own. One believes that it is the lot of all and resigns oneself to it.)

I asked the Sisters to pray for those who were left me, and I had the consoling idea that they were so pure that their petitions must surely be granted.

Since Monsieur de Flahaut's departure several letters addressed to him had come back from the Army of the Loire. To forward them to him at Lyons, where he had withdrawn, might be dangerous for him.

On the other hand, they contained perhaps news which it was important he should receive. I had enjoyed his confidence and felt that in opening them I was committing no indiscretion.

What a shock it was to read the passionate sentences of a woman who appeared to have claims on his affections and who also flattered herself that she possessed his love. At that instant all other grief disappeared.

My country, my friends, my fears, the danger I was in all vanished. Only one idea filled my soul I had been deceived! And by whom and under what circumstances?

How could I be expected to resist this new affliction? My first impulse was to bid him an eternal farewell; my second thought was that he was himself unhappy. Perhaps he found himself abandoned by a person who had cared only for his fortune.

Should I, the friend of all those who were wretched, also desert him? Would: not such an act on my part make him desperate? And should I not be to blame?

Moreover, had I not demanded too high a degree of perfection from a man? If he had really loved someone else, if he had suffered to be obliged to hide it from me, if I had stood in the way of his attaining a complete happiness, ought I not forgive him? But I kept repeating to myself: Why did he deceive me? A man does not know how completely he may be loved by a pure heart. God seems to have formed certain tender and loving souls for Himself. If they are deaf to his voice of Divine Love which fills their minds, and seek to find satisfaction elsewhere, they only encounter difficulties, suffering and misunderstanding.

After having for some time surrendered myself to all the violent emotions of my heart and all the disordered fancies of my mind, I managed to summon up what little force was left me, and wrote Monsieur de Flahaut. In this letter I alternately expressed my sympathy and contempt for him.

The letter ended by expressing the hope he would return to the woman whose love must be indeed precious to him since he had sacrificed a friendship such as mine in its favor. I promised to remain his friend, but only on one condition, that he tell me the whole truth. Having completed the effort necessary to write this letter, I sank into a profound lethargy. The courage which had not succumbed to material misfortunes now failed me completely. I had been wounded in the heart, and that was where I was the most sensitive. I could not eat anything without fainting away.

I was carried up to the mountains and there I remained for five hours without saying a word. This condition which resembled a living death suddenly vanished on the arrival of Monsieur Briatte, my husband's agent.

A chamberlain accompanied him, and both came to take my elder son away from me on behalf of his father. My misfortunes had reached their height.

Thus, I was about to lose my dearest consolation. And at this of all moments! Impossible though it may seem I consented to give up my son.

In spite of the fact that to do so broke my heart I agreed to surrender the guardianship I had so fiercely striven to obtain in the courts of law. And why? Oh, mystery of a mother's love! How could I resist since I had only misery and misfortune to offer him? He left me.

Overcome by so many blows falling upon me simultaneously, I felt my moral energy give way under the shock. Nothing mattered any longer. I felt that my life and my strength were ebbing away little by little.

To be sure the newspapers and political pamphlets described how active I still was, and I was surprised to find that other people still believed I was alive when I had ceased to exist so far as my personal interests were concerned.

I received an answer from Monsieur de Flahaut. The intensity of his despair alarmed me. He regretted he had not been one of those heroes who laid down their lives for our cause on the field of

Waterloo. He wished in spite of all the dangers it would involve to come and explain matters to me, to seek to secure my forgiveness. I gave strict orders that he was not to do so. His grief touched me and aroused my sympathy. He swore in the most touching manner that his heart had never ceased to be attached to me. That was not enough. I should have believed him. I should have pitied him, I should still have loved him, if he had had the courage to admit, "I love someone else."

Such a statement would at least have given me a sense of security, whereas the renewal of his vows of tender devotion aroused so many conflicting sentiments that my sufferings were increased.

It was in vain that the thought of his despair would occasionally intervene and moderate their intensity. The charm had vanished once and for all. He had deceived me. I could forgive, but I could not forget.

I feel grateful to Providence that at this time, when my life was still necessary to my children, I should have happened to be at Aix-les-Bains. It was undoubtedly the waters there which relaxed the tension of my nerves and saved my life.

Then too the care my younger son required reminded me of duties I seemed too inclined to forget. He was naturally delicate, and his health was still further upset by the grief of seeing his brother leave us.

I vowed not to succumb, for I was a mother and no one can take a mother's place. But to live one must have courage and strength. I sought both everywhere and refused to despair. I frequently went to see my Sisters of Charity and my hospital.

One day a woman was brought in who was extremely ill. It was impossible to open the windows of her sick-room. Suffocated by the odor I stopped at the door, but was ashamed to do so since the Sisters had not left her bedside.

I made an effort to conquer my almost over-powering physical repulsion. I succeeded and I remained beside the sick person as long as was necessary. This incident, insignificant in itself, taught me in a few seconds where real merits and real courage are to be found here below.

These saintly women possessed both to a supreme degree. I compared myself to them and discovered how little I amounted to. What right had I to be always bewailing my fate? Did I deserve the happiness that so many other persons lacked? If I had fancied that I deserved it more than others, was that not a sign of undue pride?

Heaven had given me a sensitive heart in order that I might sympathize with other people, a high rank in order that I might help them. What had I done with these gifts? I had made gifts of money which did not matter to me because I was well off;

I had protected those who were in distress, but their thanks were due those who had called my attention to their ills rather than to me. It is true I had never refused to help anyone who was in need of assistance, but I had only cared for those to whom my attention was called.

I did not seek them out for myself. No, I waited to be asked rather than volunteer my assistance. I gave orders to have alms distributed instead of distributing them personally. My kindness had been wholly passive; and what right had I to expect others to be more perfect than I was myself?

Absorbed by my unhappy love-affair, which was the more violent because I was obliged to combat and conquer it, I had only lived for one man. I had received the punishment I deserved.

My friends, my relatives, all those who have been dependent on me and who have sympathized with me, you are right to complain, to consider that I am ungrateful, and to overwhelm me with your reproof. Then, as though these reproaches had awakened me after a long swoon, I sent some people presents, others long and affectionate letters.

I wished to love everyone in order no longer to confine my affection to one only. But the relief I sought most ardently was that offered by the religion which teaches us so well how to be happy by seeking constantly to bring happiness to others and by abandoning our fate in the hands of God.

"No, no," I declared, as I pressed my son impulsively in my arms, "I will not let myself waste away. I can still do good.

When grief overwhelms us it seems as though our soul steeps itself in it complacently. We repulse everything that might remind us of life."

In these heart-breaking moments I almost forgot that I still had a brother, when suddenly, while I was worrying over what was to be my fate, I received a proof of his affection.

He did not know my address, and therefore sent a letter to someone he knew who lived near Aix, asking for news about me. This mark of sympathy revived my courage.

Monsieur de Flahaut sent me a detailed story of his life. He declared that it had centered about his affection for me, but that he had feared my high standards of perfection. My heart was too pure to understand the frailty of his, and when he had been guilty of an instant's weakness the fear of losing my esteem prevented him from telling me the truth.

A woman who understood his character had managed to hold him by the constantly repeated threat of informing me of their liaison; but when he came and offered to devote his life to me did he act as though he were abandoning anything that mattered?

Was it not clear that I was the dominant factor of his entire existence? I cared for him too dearly. I needed too much the solace of his affection not to believe him.

Once more I, who had a short time before sworn never to believe in it again, allowed myself to be ensnared in the web of human affection. As can readily be imagined, all these sentimental complications left me little desire to worry about politics. It became necessary to do so, however, and this awoke me from my lethargy. Every day my situation grew more critical.

The Austrians were withdrawing their troops from Savoy, and I was about to find myself at the mercy of the French or Piedmontese government.

My son and some other children of the same age had amused themselves by playing at soldiers in the courtyard with toy drums and sticks for muskets. This was enough to start reports that his mother was drilling regiments.

Fouché, experienced and well informed as he was, knew how much to believe in such cases, but the inexperience of his successors Monsieur de Richelieu and Monsieur Decazes caused these accounts to be accepted blindly.

The persecutions against me began again more violently than ever, as is usually the case when a credulous zeal animates those who are not accustomed to power.

They are prepared to believe the most ridiculous things. It is these legends that encourage them to consider the harm they do as just measures of retaliation.

I have never been able to understand why Monsieur le Comte de Woyna, who, so I was told daily, was to bring me back my passports, wrote Monsieur Appel to return to Paris immediately and not have anything whatever to do with me anymore.

I thus remained alone in the midst of all those perils from which until then I had been protected and which could only increase as time went on, without anyone to help me or advise me.

Twice I sent Monsieur de Marmol to secure permission to go through Switzerland, but he was not allowed to go farther than Geneva. My horses, which I had left at my country place at Pregny, were not allowed to stay there.

I saw plainly that there could be no hope of my remaining in Switzerland, but I spent my days reading descriptions of its natural beauties, as though I were to remain myself amongst them.

All I asked as compensation for what I had lost was to have some beautiful landscape before my eyes, but political reasons interfered with the fulfilment of my desires.

Those same reasons seemed to forbid my living anywhere. Indeed, where was I to go that my presence would not alarm someone? Could I stay in the territory of one of the great powers? I was suspicious of them.

In Holland? I had reigned there. In Italy? My brother had been Viceroy there. In Bavaria? I should have feared that my presence added to his difficulties. If some spot attracted me particularly, I was quickly forced to give up the idea of going there.

My uncertainty increased the dissatisfaction of my companions. They could not realize that I was no longer mistress of my own movements. In spite of all the obstacles that stood in the way they urged me to stay on at Pregny, whose advantages—its proximity to France and to my friends, the same customs, the same language as in France—they kept pointing out to me.

Alas, I should have desired nothing better; but how was it possible for me to remain? I wore myself out explaining to them the strangeness of the position in which I found myself. I wished to make them understand it.

Happiness requires no explanation, misfortune does. I said to them over and over again: "The only place we can be happy in is France, but we shall not be left in peace so long as we remain there."

I was right. The foreign rulers separated without taking the trouble to decide what was to become of me. I received letters about my visit at Aix which alarmed me.

Dangers of all kinds seemed to accumulate around me. My friends advised me not to remain a day longer at Aix. The excesses which were being committed throughout southern France might easily extend to where I was.

At this very time my sole defenders the Austrians withdrew and turned Aix over to the Piedmontese. General Roxmans, whose behavior had shown that he kept a necessary and benevolent watch over me, no longer commanded this territory. But what was I to do since Geneva would not let me set foot on its soil?

The idea finally occurred to me to write directly to the Swiss Diet to ask permission to cross their country and to proceed to Constance. The Grand Duke of Baden was a relative of mine he had always behaved in a friendly manner toward me.

Surely, he would not refuse me an asylum. I confess I was astonished at the completeness with which the Emperor of Russia had severed all relations with me. I was prepared to admit that it was his policy to refuse me any active support, but surely that was no reason for his not displaying the slightest interest in my lot, surrounded as I was by so many dangers.

He certainly must have been aware of my position. He finally seemed to be a little less harsh. He bought a portion of the picture gallery at Malmaison which the Allies wished to seize.

Doubtless it was more to do my brother a favor than out of regard for me. Monsieur de Vaux it is true wrote me that the Russian envoy Comte Capo d'Istria was the only one who had listened to his requests and it was from this minister that I received passports authorizing me to proceed to Constance, at the same time as I received the answer from the Diet granting me permission to cross Switzerland.

Thus, once more it was the Emperor of Russia to whom I was indebted for these slight favors, but so many things had disappointed me in his attitude I felt I could no longer consider him as a friend.

After four months of anxiety, uncertainty and danger I left Aix, November 28, 1815. I left a spot where my heart had been cruelly wounded, a spot associated in my mind with the loss of a friend and the collapse of illusions.

To avoid spending the night at an inn I stopped at my country place at Pregny, which was on the borderline between France and Switzerland.

About four o'clock in the morning my servants were arrested, and my house surrounded by a band of fifty armed men. It was said I was escorting imperial generals in disguise out of the country.

The gendarmes made a thorough search all over the house except in my room, which they did not dare enter in spite of the strictness of their orders. I obliged them to do so, saying: "Come in, gentlemen. Do not be afraid of hurting my feelings. I am leaving France forever and am glad once more to see French uniforms."

They were evidently ill at ease and withdrew at once. The sous-prefet sent me an order from Monsieur Decazes written in such rude terms that I smiled contemptuously.

He expressly forbade me to set foot on French soil. The local authorities were held responsible for seeing that I obeyed this order.

What heroic qualities was I supposed to possess that rendered my presence so terrifying? I left while the cannon at Geneva were saluting the arrival there of the Prince of Metternich.

I passed through the canton of Vaux without any incident occurring. At Payerne, just as I was about to have supper, a Frenchman sent word he wished to speak to me. It was General Ameil.

"What imprudence this is on your part!" I exclaimed. "May it not lead you directly into danger?"

"Madame, I owe you my life. I heard you were staying here. How could I resist the opportunity to express my gratitude?"

He then described how, with the passport I had given him, he had successfully evaded the search that had been made for him.

One night, having stopped at an inn in the canton of Valais, the innkeeper had asked him to share his room with another traveler whose carriage had broken down.

He consented. Who should the other traveler be but Monsieur de Blacas, who was going to Naples to act as French Ambassador there? It was to Monsieur de Blacas' house that General Ameil had been taken on March 19, accused of wishing to desert to the Emperor.

He would have been shot had it not been for what took place on the 20th.

Consequently, he had lost no time in dressing and hurrying off into the mountains. Later he had taken refuge in a little isolated chateau inhabited by former royalist emigrants from France, who knew what it was to be in distress and who had kept his secret and given him a post as tutor for their children.

The alacrity with which he hastened to greet me proved fatal to him. He attracted the attention of several of the men who shadowed my movements, and was shortly afterwards obliged to leave his hiding-place for fear of being handed over to the French authorities.

He wrote to me at that time. My brother and I sent him money to rejoin his wife and sail for the United States. He was captured at Hanover and thrown into prison, where, so I am told, he lost his mind.

I have noticed that in general during political upheavals men have less moral resistance than women. They are more easily confused and dismayed. The reason is simple enough; a man obeys the promptings of ambition. It is natural that he should lose hope if he sees the object of his desires escape him.

No blow could be more cruel. A woman on the contrary is all affection, can only be wounded through her affections and is therefore more courageous regarding everything that does not affect her in that respect.

From Payerne I went on to Berne where I also spent the night. I left my carriage at the entrance of the little town of Morat. In spite of the cold I enjoyed making a little sketch of this snow-covered landscape.

Suddenly I saw armed men who had been watching me for some time advance toward me. They informed me they had instructions to put me under arrest. I was not moved by this. Nothing could astonish me any longer. I simply remarked that in the past the Swiss had performed a more notable exploit at Morat.

The only inconvenience the arrest caused me was to oblige me to wait in a wretched tavern in the bitter cold till Monsieur de Marmol could obtain an explanation of this order. He was forced to return twice to Fribourg, and the council composed of the high dignitaries of the canton took two days to make up their minds what to do.

They gave as excuse that it was necessary for them to teach the national committee a lesson, because the committee had never announced officially that I was coming (never announced it, that is to

the canton of Fribourg, which had nothing to do with the matter as I was not stopping within its confines).

The real reason was that local authorities were anxious to display their authority and show how they could revenge themselves upon a queen who had lost her throne, for their long submission to the power of her family.

Much has been said about the ambitions of great men. Is it not after all more bearable than the petty vexations inflicted by little people animated by trifling motives?

As I had been obliged to spend two days in a miserable inn at Morat the persons who were with me expected every moment to see Monsieur and Madame Pourtale, whose château was nearby, come to see me.

It would have been natural for Madame de Portale, whose marriage had been arranged by my mother and who was indebted to her for her education and dowry, to treat me with some consideration.

Neither she nor her husband appeared. After having received so many favors from us, this conduct on their part might seem astonishing, but I still cared enough about the man who I had hoped would marry my friend Madame de Broc and the woman whom the Empress had treated as her own daughter to try to find some excuses for them.

I almost regretted my presence, which caused their conduct to be severely criticized in Paris. I even heard that in order to defend themselves they told all sorts of absurd stories about me, without stopping to remember that the most painful accusations that can be made against us are those of people we considered our friends.

I was saddened to see more and more clearly the melancholy fact that adversity is the only real test of friendship as it is of love.

I arrived at Berne, where Monsieur de Krudener, the Russian Ambassador, treated me with the greatest respect. He had for a long time been attached to the Russian Embassy in Paris and recalled the manner in which we had received him.

It was doubtless thanks to him that I succeeded in leaving this city, so great was the hatred against the name I bore.

The landamman himself, Monsieur de Watteville, forgetting the kindness of my mother to his son and his wife when they were in Paris, was rude enough to send one of his cousins who was a police official to call on me.

This official inquired who the man was who had dined with me at the inn of Payerne. I told him that I did not know the person's name and was not prepared to answer any more questions about him.

My servants were taken into custody and obliged to describe the appearance of poor General Ameil, whom fortunately they had seen only on this one occasion.

Intentionally they gave an entirely false description. I left this canton under the escort of a colonel of the local police force and followed by all the spies of the region. It was both amusing and ridiculous to see all the precautions and the fears that the approach of a feeble woman and a child of seven could provoke.

The behavior of the authorities struck me as so silly that at times it made me smile, at other times it filled me with a sort of pride. I must count for something after all, I said to myself. I have held high rank; I have encountered many people who have met with reverses.

As I sympathized with them and did what I could to relieve their distress, I felt that everyone would do the same. I see I was wrong. Thus, my behavior must have been meritorious.

This idea satisfied me sufficiently to allow me to endure with the same calm all the vexations which were inflicted on me.

Monsieur de Krudener again made me realize how indifferent I had become to the Emperor of Russia, who on his journey through Switzerland, although he knew where I was, did not even trouble to ask his ambassador about me.

Yet I could not believe that he had previously been insincere in his attitude toward me.

People must have been mistaken in saying that he simply acted from motives of policy in being friendly with me in 1814 and hostile toward me in 1815.

I prefer to believe that the explanation of his change in attitude is to be found in his naturally suspicious character and in the intrigues planned to increase those suspicions as far as I was concerned. This is an example of the lengths to which these maneuvers went.

At the time of the Emperor's return from Elba a letter I wrote my brother was intercepted. In it I begged him to speak to the Emperor of Russia in the hope of preserving peace, the one thing I really desired. My handwriting was imitated, and certain remarks were added regarding the best manner in which to approach the Emperor of Russia, whose weak vanity I boasted of being familiar with. This letter wrapped around a perfume bottle was taken to the Emperor. If this story is true—as I presume it is on account of a remark made me by Monsieur Boutiaguine the last time I saw him in Paris, which I did not understand at the time—am I not right in being less severe in my criticism of the Emperor's conduct?

After a journey, whose fatigues had been increased by the intense cold and the incessant vexations I was exposed to, I arrived at Constance, which is a frontier town belonging to the Grand Duchy of Baden.

The sight of its gloomy houses, the deserted aspect of its streets, the quiet which seemed to envelop it made me consider it a place remote from the world.

Such silence after so much agitation, such isolation after having been the center of so many passions pleased me, and I promised myself that there I should find that rest which seemed constantly to flee before me. But a chamberlain of the court of Baden was sent to inform me that the treaties forbade any member of the imperial family to live elsewhere than within the limits of one of the four great powers.

Such severity toward a woman to whom he was related, who had proved her friendship for the Grand Duke in the past, at first shocked me. Since then, having found out that he had been obliged to resist the wishes of his entire family, who were anxious to have his marriage annulled, I felt it quite understandable that he should not have desired to provoke new quarrels about someone who was not a close relative. But once more where was I to go?

Everyone was surprised at the courage I displayed in supporting the vicissitudes of fate. I deserved no praise for doing so.

Helpless where my heart was concerned, I had received wounds there that would never heal, but the caprices of fortune were beneath my consideration. We become stronger as we become able to watch worldly position and rank vanish without emotion.

We feel proud to discover within ourselves the force that makes us consider such things with contempt. Even the hate with which our enemies seek to overwhelm us helps us by its very intensity to support their injustice.

CHAPTER XIX
POLITICS AND PERSONALITIES (DECEMBER 7, 1815- APRIL, 1817)

The Emperor's Government—Slanders About Him—The Family of the Emperor—The Bourbons—Spies—The French Exiles—Visit from Eugene—Monsieur de Metternich—Monsieur de Flahaut in England—The Little Prince—Louis Demands His Marriage Be Dissolved—Monsieur de Flahaut Again—Pilgrimage to Einsiedeln—A Confession and a Forgiveness—The Break with Flahaut—The Purchase of Arenenberg—Hospitable Bavaria—Purchase of a House at Augsburg.

PASSPORTS from the minister of Russia, which stated in the name of the Allies that I was to be allowed to remain in Constance, reassured my hosts, and I was permitted to stay there, at least provisionally.

Thus, I was not obliged again to expose my health, which had been failing rapidly, to all the dangers of a harsh winter. I settled down in a little house on the shores of the lake. But there too I was pursued and persecuted in so many ways that I did not know which of the different governments was the most hostile toward me.

Naturally the French envoys did their best to annoy me. They would have been unlikely to allow such an opportunity to escape for proving their devotion to their new master.

This was especially true of those who, like Monsieur Auguste de Talleyrand, had in the past served the Emperor. I would, however, have expected some personal animosity on the part of Louis XVIII.

Instead he one day said to the Duc d'Otrante : "People say all sorts of things against her. I do not believe them. Let her go somewhere in Switzerland for a time. Everything will be forgotten and she can come back."

I was not inclined to take advantage of this favor, however. I remembered too keenly everything I had had to suffer in Paris and I enjoyed, in a sense, being in exile.

At least now there could be nothing equivocal about my position. Thus, it was not toward the monarch himself that I felt resentful, but toward those ambitious men who in order to make themselves seem indispensable exaggerated the alleged dangers of the situation in which the Bourbons found themselves.

The Emperor Napoleon's government never troubled about such minor matters. Once an enemy had been defeated, he was no longer to be feared, and the report of a subordinate could not injure him.

The Emperor's genius at once distinguished truth from falsehood. Even had caution made him suspicious the sense of his power would have reassured him immediately.

Then too the contempt he had for men in general contributed to make him indulgent toward them. He was rarely mistaken in his general theories regarding human nature, but he offended people by applying these theories to their particular cases.

The result was that although those who sought only to further their personal interests were always satisfied, those who felt the need of appreciation in order to be contented were never altogether happy.

The amount of work he had to do allowed the Emperor only time enough to pay attention to a person's abilities, not to his character. If he made mistakes it was by trusting those whose interests he had served rather than whose pride he had flattered. He should have remembered that passions are stronger than deliberate calculation.

Thus, when he allied himself completely to Austria through his marriage he believed in the strength of this union because he felt it was useful to both nations. He did not realize that whereas he could forget his successes it was harder for his associates not to remember their defeats.

His mind was too lofty to understand hatred. He aroused it in others, but did not feel it himself. Even when he was informed that people hated him, he did not seek to punish them.

He was therefore prepared to forgive everything except what affected his power or interfered with his plans. One day I heard him make the following remark: "I have one goal. It is a lofty one, and I wish to attain it. So much the worse for those who get in my way."

He illustrated his meaning by comparing his career to a mountain the ascent of which was difficult, but which he scaled, pushing roughly aside everything that stood in his path.

Once he had reached the summit, however, he was prepared to help those whom he had wounded in his ascent.

In the retired spot in which I now found myself I read all the slanders which were being printed about the Emperor. Till then I admit I had never been able to realize how utterly passion can repudiate what it so recently worshiped.

As a Frenchwoman, it was particularly painful for me to note how my compatriots were lacking in self-respect, since even the captivity of a great man did not disarm their hatred against him.

They preferred to sully the memory of his success rather than pity his misfortune.

Ingratitude actually became contempt.

This crowd of nobility and kings he had created refused to bestow a title on the man without whom they would never have had one themselves. But what harm can such insignificant beings do to a genius?

As for us, the members of his family, people displayed their disdain in every possible way. In order to please them we should have abased ourselves.

As the Queen of Westphalia, whose behavior was so dignified, expressed it, "They are jealous even of the air we breathe."

I must do justice to the members of the Emperor's family. Under all circumstances they displayed nobility of sentiment, force of character and a proper pride. Without money, without anyone to take their side, although exposed to all sorts of vexations, they won people's respect wherever they happened to be. It is true that misfortune makes a man more perfect.

If he is inclined to be/vain and self-important when Fortune smiles on him, it is because Prosperity is a bad advisor.

It was just after my arrival at Constance that I heard of the execution of Marshal Ney.

This showed me that even military glory is not sufficient to avoid people's hatred. In vain his wife had done everything she could to save him. He was bound to die, and all his glorious deeds were not enough to cause his sentence to be suspended.

But how was it that even Monsieur Lavallette, so calm, so highly respected by all, and whom only a few could condemn for his unalterable devotion to the Emperor, fell a victim to the spirit of revenge on the part of the politicians?

When I read how he had escaped, thanks only to his wife's devotion, I trembled for fear he might be recaptured.

In that case it would be useless to count on any sign of the mercy which I had always believed existed.

I had been wrong to judge things as they were now, in accordance with what they had been in the past. The fact of being constantly in touch with an exceptional man and of noticing how his lofty ideals were reflected in his smallest actions had caused me to believe that I should find these same sentiments elsewhere.

I forgot that ordinary men all behave alike and are all swayed by commonplace prejudices. To avoid being mistaken in one's opinions of people one should take care to descend to the level of those whom one is judging.

That was why I could not understand what was going on in France. I could not understand the acts of violence that were taking place there. To be sure I recalled some of those which had occurred in my childhood and from which my family had suffered, but those had generally been committed by unprincipled, uneducated men.

Today, under the rule of a respectable family which deserved public sympathy on account of the misfortunes it had suffered, Frenchmen were allowed to assassinate other Frenchmen with impunity.

Was it possible to believe that the Bourbons thought themselves foreigners ruling over a foreign land? By doing so they repudiated the glorious victories our armies had achieved and the benefits of our form of government, even while they were benefiting by them.

Instead of trying to prove that the army was insubordinate and the nation corrupt, they should have recognized the value of both, and placed themselves at the head of all worthy undertakings.

The monarch's recognition of heroic deeds accomplished in the past would have won the support of those whom so many marks of contempt now kept at a distance.

Since then I have grown calmer. I have come to understand that these are the usual effects of a counter-revolution, unless some firm hand directs it, and that the ruler's motto might be the phrase, "Protect me from my friends, I can take care of my enemies."

Personally, I found myself surrounded by spies of all kinds. Frequently, in order to win my confidence, they would employ the artifice of pretended misfortune.

I would listen to them, even knowing that what I was told might not be true. I went so far as to try to soothe those who, when asking for favors, at the same time protested bitterly against existing conditions.

Nevertheless, I remained a highly suspicious character in the eyes of all the governments. Since no actual proof against me existed, my enemies spread all sorts of ridiculous and absurd stories about me.

Sometimes it was said I had been seen in disguise in Paris or in some other part of France; sometimes I was reported to have received officers who had been dismissed from the army or envoys from groups of the Emperor's adherents.

The more these tales lacked foundation, the more dangerous and skillful I was thought to be. Sometimes I was reminded of that melancholy period when my husband evoked phantoms which troubled both his peace of mind and my own.

I found that governments were inclined to do exactly the same thing. They laid the same snares for me that my husband had, and, as in his case, I made no resistance but simply continued the even tenor of my ways, trusting in the purity of my intentions and my irreproachable con-duct.

Now I had as an added comfort an idea I had not had before; namely, that it was doubtless part of my destiny to be unjustly suspected, and that I must submit to it as one does to something that is unavoidable.

Among the French exiles I saw arrive at Constance there were some former members of the revolutionary assembly, now almost all grown old and feeble.

Pitilessly banished from Switzerland, they came to spend their last days by my side. One poor woman who was suffering from acute lung trouble could not obtain permission to stop at Berne and died an hour after she had completed her journey.

On seeing so much misery, weak-minded people might readily have believed that Madame de Krudener had been really inspired when she had declared: "Those who follow the Emperor Napoleon's cause will be persecuted and tracked down. They will not have a place to lay their heads."

I might therefore explain the character of Madame de Krudener as I deciphered it, and at the same time relate what I afterwards learned about her.

After I had listened to her for a little while, it was evident to me that it was her kindness of heart which had attracted her to religion, while it was her too vivid imagination which had troubled her mind.

All her inspirations seemed to her to come from God. As she had only pure and beneficent ones, her doctrine was harmless as far as she was concerned but were not other people in danger of taking promptings of their human desires as the instructions of Providence?

The ladies in attendance on the Empress of Russia saw Madame de Krudener frequently at Baden in 1814, and doubtless she predicted the same things to them that she did to me.

The Emperor of Russia heard about this, and when he passed through the Grand Duchy of Baden with his troops, he was very anxious to see her.

A little superstition is always mixed with our fears and our hopes. In times of stress men feel the need of looking into the future and turn to supernatural forces for assistance.

Alexander, pious by nature, was very ready to be led astray in such matters.

Not knowing where to find Madame de Krudener, he was on his knees in prayer, beseeching God to bring her to him, when there was a knock at the door and a letter was brought him from the very person whose advice he considered so supremely important.

Such a coincidence was certainly singular. Madame de Krudener was writing him on behalf of some people who were in distress. The Emperor sent for her, and she remained with him until he reached Paris.

During his stay there he went to see her alone every evening. They prayed together, and her influence over him was apparent in his refusal to help in any way those who he considered had incurred the wrath of the Almighty.

Thus, out of love of God he relinquished that of his neighbor, although one must be blind indeed not to see that the two are really the same.

She meanwhile went about in the prisons consoling those who were to die, although she was only interested in what became of them after death.

She wept with them and encouraged them to pray, but considered it impossible to attempt to save the lives of those whom God had condemned. Among the prisoners she saw was La Bedoyère.

Yet the character of Emperor Napoleon did not quite agree with the role her imagination had assigned to him.

For a long time, she was convinced that he was the Anti-christ whose coming the prophets had predicted and who would come to reign over the nations of the world, which would bow down before him.

As long as Napoleon showed no signs of posing as a divinity, she felt he had not completed his career, and she kept saying, "He will come back."

Meanwhile she labored incessantly to find means to rescue humanity from the being whom she considered capable of causing mankind's damnation.

It was she and no one else that conceived the idea of the Holy Alliance and caused it to be formed.

Madame de Krudener was wholly absorbed in her mystic visions, and yet politics intervened and used her to accomplish its purposes.

Thus, important events may be the outcome of the weakness of a private individual.

As may readily be imagined I did not obtain all these details from Madame de Krudener herself. One day I said to her laughingly: "The Emperor of Russia is the man who more closely resembles the Antichrist. He possesses the charm, winning manner and power of seduction one associates with that personage, whereas the Emperor Napoleon even when a prisoner, although he fascinates the imagination, arouses a feeling of respect and awe which precludes any more tender emotions."

Madame de Krudener did not permit anyone to joke on this subject, and always ended by saying: "If the Emperor Napoleon was really the man who was destined to bring about catastrophe, it was not his fault, and we should pray for him."

I have never known a woman who inspired a more lively affection because of her kindness of heart, more alarm on account of her madness and more madness because of her persuasive qualities.

Her insanity became more and more acute, and on her succumbing to a sort of mania for prophecy she was in her turn persecuted and driven from place to place, till at last she found refuge in Russia.

Sometime after my arrival at Constance, I had the joy of being able once more to embrace my brother. He had left his family at Munich and came to pay me a visit.

How many things I had to tell him and how a moment's pleasure can make one forget days of suffering!

Once more I felt that I was not alone on earth and that there was someone who still loved me sincerely. Eugene listened without astonishment to my account of all the tribulations I had experienced, and informed me of the hatred with which the word Frenchman was pronounced all over Europe.

He too had been a victim of this hatred, although he had taken no part in recent events.

He did not conceal the fact that several libelous pamphlets about me were being circulated in Germany. They had profoundly exasperated him, and though he did not for an instant doubt his sister he regretted the fact that such charges were brought against her.

He, at least, had come unsoiled through all the struggle and won the reward his conduct had deserved.

Brave, loyal, frank, generous, incapable of betraying his word, preferring honor to position, a dignified retreat to power earned by base means, and the performance of his duty to any pleasures, his character was gay, indulgent, well-poised and gentle.

Easy-going as regards the little things in life, he held decided opinions on serious questions of conduct. His mind was solid rather than brilliant, his feelings deep rather than expansive.

He possessed a judgment that was both clear and far-sighted. Having been accustomed to serve a man who was jealous of his own power, my brother had acquired the habit of more or less effacing himself, keeping in the background where he escaped notice. But in society the only talents that are appreciated are those which glitter.

In short, I had just bidden farewell to a great man and now found myself in the company of a good one. Eugene told me that Monsieur Lavallette was in hiding near the place where he lived and that this was with the permission of the King of Bavaria.

It was agreed that in the spring I should go and visit him, meeting at the same time his little children whom I had never seen. When he left, I found myself once more alone, with no one to comfort me and surrounded by more dangers than ever.

At that time a brother's visit to his sister did not seem natural and aroused all sorts of conjectures.

Never did men display greater cowardice and behave more despicably than during this period.

One day I received a letter from Monsieur de Metternich containing an Austrian passport. He invited me, on behalf of the Emperor of Austria, to come and live in that country where I should be treated with all the respect due my rank.

Doubtless the Emperor was the sovereign to whom it was most logical that I should look for assistance. My children were cousins of his grandson; but did he still remember this fact?

Had he not given me sufficient reason to distrust him? I decided to decline for the time being, and added that both at Constance and in his own territory I hoped always to be able to count on him for protection.

I admit that I preferred freedom, even though it involved danger, to the protection offered by a prison.

Then too I found much that was attractive in my solitary retreat. The scenery was magnificent. Not far away from the town itself was a little wood called Lorette where I walked every morning.

The lofty snow-covered mountains reflecting in the lake gave a grand and imposing beauty to the scene, while close at hand the leaves were beginning to bud, the early violets made their appearance, and nature every day became more lovely. My chief concern was to watch the progress of spring, just as my only joy was to gather the flowers it brings with it.

The more one has suffered from human beings the more one enjoys nature. Only nature calms and rests the mind and can efface the most painful impressions. Of all the attributes of luxury and wealth that I had formerly possessed, what I missed most was the bouquet of roses and Parma violets which was brought me every morning from Saint-Leu.

I dreamed of owning this little wood of Lorette, of building a little house there and of gathering about me a few faithful friends. I had made all my plans, and like the milkmaid in La Fontaine's fable, I already saw before me a simple but attractive cottage.

I smelled in anticipation the perfume of the violets and roses which I should certainly have planted there, and I let myself be carried away by these projects as one does by plans which both the mind and heart can approve of without reserve.

Soon, however, I learned that orders had been given that I was not to be allowed to acquire any property in the Grand Duchy of Baden. Thus, my troubles were to include the smallest as well as the greatest joys life has to offer.

Although up to that time not one of my actions would have justified the allied sovereigns in thinking that I had anything to do with politics, an incident now occurred which, had they heard of it, might have given them a certain excuse for their alarms. And yet only fanatics would consider it a crime to save the life of a man condemned to death for a political offense.

My banker forwarded me a letter from a colonel confined in the prison of Lyons. It informed me that General Mouton-Duvernet, who had been condemned to death, could be saved if a sum of a hundred thousand francs which the jailer demanded as a bribe could be collected.

Only twenty thousand francs were needed to complete this amount. Time was precious. The General was about to be transferred to another prison, and then all hope would be lost.

The prisoner's friends felt they might turn to us in this extremity and they therefore besought my brother and myself to contribute to the release of this brave officer as rapidly as possible.

I sent a letter about the matter to my brother, but it would have taken time for an answer to reach me. The slightest delay might have proved fatal to the General. I had no money.

Consequently, I decided to send a diamond valued at twenty thousand francs. I concealed the fact from all those about me as though I were doing wrong.

The smallest gift to charity aroused their alarm, for it was said everywhere that I spent money to provoke popular uprisings.

What would people have thought had they heard about this diamond? Nevertheless, nothing stopped me. A man's life was at stake.

I received two replies, one from my brother who consented to help the prisoner, the other from the colonel, who acknowledged receipt of the diamond and at the same time related the tragic scenes that were taking place in the south of France and the incidents at Grenoble, and expressed the hope of some change in the political situation.

Nevertheless, General Mouton-Duvernet was tried, condemned and shot. I wrote the banker to inform his client that in future I would receive no more letters from a country where my help could not avert misfortune.

The banker came to see me. My letter had made him realize what was going on. We had both been duped by a scheming rascal to whom he had loaned money.

By reading to him this sort of political report which was being forwarded to me the banker had been made to believe that, thanks to my influence, a revolution was about to break out, and he had advanced funds without taking any further precautions.

In order to prevent a scandal, which would have compromised me, I was obliged to repay part of his losses. Sacrifices of this kind meant little to me. I have never known the value of money.

I could not bear the idea of owing anyone a penny. Everything that was mine was to be had for the asking. I have never once refused a request for money. How could I humiliate a person who was so much in distress as to be obliged to ask for help?

In 1814, almost overnight my fortune was reduced by the treaties from an income of two million francs to four hundred thousand. I was at first surprised. How was I to manage, since in my budget this amount of four hundred thousand francs was completely covered by one item, my charities?

But caring for luxury as little as I did it was easy enough to adjust my expenses, and my arrangements were made rapidly. Now I found myself in a very different position.

No more income, no more resources of any kind except my diamonds and my picture gallery, which I should have sold off immediately in order to constitute a capital. But I felt no need of money.

I imagined one could live without it. Consequently, the results of the first few sales of my pictures were devoted to assuring the future of those who accompanied me into exile. If I enjoyed the thought that they remained with me through a spirit of devotion, I was also pleased to make them so independent that I need have no doubt of that devotion.

I was so impatient to see them happy that I sent for their children, their entire families to join us. I doubtless acted too quickly, more so than if I had stopped to think, but then, as always, I obeyed the promptings of my desire to make others happy, a desire which was constantly being frustrated.

No matter how submissive may be the attitude of those who share the misfortune of others, they never can be as patient as we are on whom those misfortunes fall directly. They feel that their lot is the more painful of the two and imagine that they are the persons really afflicted by loss of wealth and a change from their usual comfort. They are more inconsolable than we are. This is natural enough. The person who is really afflicted by Fate surmounts these petty worries, and the very extent of his losses contributes toward making him calm.

My one occupation in the quiet retreat in which I now found myself was to compose melancholy ballads. I did so easily. Not even the chatter of a drawing-room disturbed me. I wrote "Partant pour la Syrie" at Malmaison, while my mother played backgammon.

The song proved popular and was sung during the war of 1809, as "La Sentinelle" was during the Spanish campaign. After that, each time the armies took the field I would be asked to write something, which I did reluctantly, for I did not like to seem to pose as an author, too lofty a title for my modest talents.

At Constance I had only a few books and no collection of poetry in which I could find verses to set to music. I had in the past written some verses for my brother and I tried to write some poems, but

the difficulty of finding rhymes, the restraint imposed on me by the verse form tired me and after having scribbled some very poor doggerel I remained faithful to music.

I often received letters from Monsieur de Flahaut. He had been well received in England, and he was most anxious to arrange to come and live near me. The idea of seeing him amid the scenes which surrounded me gave them an added charm.

A beautiful place, a beloved person—I have never understood how anyone could desire more.

That had always been my sole ambition. France had forever banished my family from her soil. The death sentence had been passed against any of us who dared set foot within her boundaries.

This decree had wounded me deeply. Even my son, in spite of his extreme youth, had exclaimed with tears running down his cheeks: "Do they really mean it, mamma? Aren't we ever going to live in France anymore?"

I could not utter the fatal "No" without a deep emotion. But once the instant had passed, I tried to find elements of consolation even in my children's unhappy fate.

I said to myself that it was best for them to be brought up far from the flattery of courtiers, amid humble surroundings.

There closer to the sufferings of the poor, they could learn to sympathize with those in distress. This proved the case. For instance, my younger son appeared one day without his shoes. He had just given them to a poor little boy who did not have any, and his tutor, who was a few steps away, had not had time to see him do it.

Had he been surrounded by a royal bodyguard I should not have had the opportunity of rejoicing over this sign of his generosity.

Hence, I ought not to regret their present position as long as they were young; but, later, when they had reached the age of serving their country, would it be possible for them to do so?

Was this not a vain dream of mine? The future seemed too gloomy; I dared not think of it. It would have annihilated the courage with which I faced my present lot and which enabled me to be almost contented with it.

Once I happened to read in a newspaper that the Duchesse d'Angoulême had gone to see my protegees at Saint Denis. That institution had been founded under my auspices.

It had been placed under my special protection. All those young hearts had loved me. I felt that they were being taken from me. The incident caused me one of the most painful pangs of regret I experienced in the face of so many vanished glories.

I left Constance in the month of June to see my brother, who was living just then at a little country place on the lake of Stahrenberg in Bavaria.

His handsome, well brought up children, his wife, so happy in their midst, formed a perfect picture of that domestic felicity which I had so ardently desired but never attained.

Monsieur Lavallette under an assumed name was in hiding on another little estate about two miles from there. My joy at seeing him once more was equal to my emotion at hearing him describe his adventures which had ended so miraculously.

Alas, his wife, to whom he owed his life, broken by so many varied emotions, grief-stricken at the death of a son to whom she had just given birth, imprisoned in a narrow cell, constantly the prey of alarm regarding her husband's safety, had not been able to resist so much suffering.

Her mind had failed her. When at last a tardy justice had given her her freedom, restored her to the world's admiring enthusiasm and to the gratitude of a loving husband, her disordered brain prevented her from enjoying the happiness she had so richly deserved.

The Queen of Bavaria came to Stahrenberg to visit my sister-in-law. In spite of the prejudice that so many slanderous stories might have aroused in regard to me, personally, and the general prejudice she was said to have against the French, I had no reason to find fault with her attitude toward me.

She was the first to speak of the cordial welcome I had given her in Paris, and I must say that at this time few persons were prepared to remember or refer to the past.

I returned to my retreat from where I went to Gais, a village situated on the top of the Appenzell, in order to follow a treatment of goat's milk which had been prescribed for me. There I met a landamman, formerly a notorious enemy of the Emperor and one of the members of the Diet who had most vigorously opposed my stay in Switzerland.

He admitted this to me, as well as the fact that seeing me had dissipated the fears, he had felt regarding me. As his canton was the only one which refused to furnish recruits for the French army, Ambassador Auguste de Talleyrand made violent protests to the landamman.

Talleyrand attributed this refusal to my influence. He said the flattering way in which the landamman spoke of me proved this. From that moment on I found an ardent partisan in the man to whom this unjust act revealed the violence of feeling that existed against me.

When one recognizes that he is mistaken in one thing, he is easily inclined to believe that his entire judgment was wrong. When a hostile criticism has led us to be mistaken in our opinion of someone, we feel the need of making amends and become the more favorably disposed toward him in proportion to the degree in which we were previously hostile.

It is in this way that I am indebted to the general hostility against me for several dear friends. As for my landamman, he realized the error into which he had fallen so thoroughly that, in spite of being well over fifty, he offered me his hand and his fortune.

He even undertook to secure a divorce for me, and on my refusing as tactfully as possible he offered me his canton and even his own house as a refuge against my persecutors, adding that only time should ever make me leave it. Since then he has come to understand the unsuitableness of his proposal, but has not ceased to be devoted to me. I began to think that I was to be left unmolested in my retreat and was happy in the thought that Monsieur de Flahaut would come shortly and share it with me. While not expecting his immediate arrival I unconsciously turned my steps in the direction from which he would arrive, and if I saw a man in the distance, the sight of him would make my heart beat faster.

Yet frequently this desire for his coming was checked by all the arguments my mind presented against it. What would the world say to our reunion?

Would it not have the right to criticize me harshly? And I, what happiness can I offer a man who thus takes it on himself to share my misfortune? He enjoys society and is popular.

If he follows me now, he must abandon it and be prepared to devote himself to the company of a person who is a social outcast.

Only the very deepest affection can replace everything else the world has to offer. Perhaps it is a lofty rather than a tender sentiment which prompts him to return to me. I will not accept this sacrifice. He knows how dear he is to me, but if he can do without me, then I must bear it.

In order to do so in advance, I conjured up all the difficulties such a union would create and alternately exaggerated and diminished them. In the midst of all these hesitations I received a letter from my husband.

Since leaving France I had had by letter business discussions that proved he still intended to remain my master. This letter on the contrary declared he wished us to separate and have our marriage dissolved.

He asked me to give him his freedom and begged me to join him in requesting the Pope for it, and to declare that our marriage had taken place under compulsion.

He added that I probably remembered that when he married me, he was really in love with my cousin Madame Lavallette.

The attention she had recently attracted was probably what had reminded my husband of her. I leave my readers to imagine into what new state of perplexity such a proposal plunged me, coming as it did at this time, when my mind was already full of sentimental thoughts.

To be free, to be able to marry the one man I had ever loved, to be able to have at last what I had always longed for—a happy home. This was almost too great a happiness for me to bear. And it was almost within my grasp. How cruelly I would suffer if I was forced to give it up! But I had my children and my conscience. I could not sacrifice both.

To declare that I had married under constraint would be to commit a perjury, at least to myself. Moreover, is not the marriage bond a sacred and indissoluble one? How had I been able to imagine that I was free? I therefore decided to try to convince my husband that such a plan was impossible and urge him to give it up.

The more my desires agreed with his, the more I thought of my duty and my children's interests. I felt then how keenly human nature can suffer from those conflicts between the heart and the brain. I learned at the same time that the secret of retaining one's peace of mind is to strive to be completely sincere, to obey only the promptings of one's conscience and leave the rest to Providence.

Consequently when the ecclesiastical council of Constance came to question me in the name of the Pope, and made me swear on the Gospel to tell the whole truth, I did not need to hesitate in replying to all their questions.

At the end of this meeting, which lasted a long while, Abbe Bertrand suggested to me that a question as important as this required longer reflection on my part and at least the calling of a family council.

He quoted the example of several princesses, whose answers on similar occasions had been rehearsed and commented on by a gathering of bishops. I checked his erudition by assuring him that all the family councils in the world would never persuade me to say a word that was untrue, that, having obeyed the dictates of my own conscience, I was prepared to accept whatever decision might be taken in regard to me, and that I had a certain merit in doing this and thus scrutinizing the secrets of my heart.

In accordance with his latest promises, Monsieur de Flahaut gave me the fullest details of every incident of his daily life. He had attracted the attention of a young woman, rich, independent, and possessing many accomplishments and talents.

He was touched by the interest she displayed in him, but his only thought was when he could come to me, and he had asked for his passport.

We do not know how much we demand when we require someone to tell us the whole truth about what he is doing and thinking. These confidences from Monsieur de Flahaut intensified the agitation which filled my heart.

It seemed that he could be happy away from me and might even make a successful marriage. Thus I became an obstacle to his happiness. What a melancholy thought!

Should I not suggest that he pause and examine his sentiments toward me? He does not yet say he loves the other woman. On the contrary he assures me of his entire devotion. But perhaps he is mistaken?

This is what he must make sure of. I wrote him to heed only the promptings of his heart and to pursue only the course which might prove the best for him.

He replied that what mattered most in the world to him was to be able to devote his life to me. Yet, while waiting for permission to leave England, he made a trip to Scotland which allowed him to see more of the young woman who had expressed her liking for him.

I studied every indication that might help me understand his sentiments. I so bitterly feared that my heart might be leading me astray.

On his return to London, Monsieur de Flahaut informed me that new difficulties had arisen and asked me to obtain him a passport from Bavaria.

My brother, whom I asked to do this for me, replied that a Frenchman must apply to his own government and have his request countersigned by the ambassador of the country to which he wished to go.

This was the customary procedure, and there was little danger of such a request being refused. If, however, after having tried all these measures Monsieur de Flahaut still failed to secure his papers, my brother was prepared to try to secure a passport for him.

I sent this reply to Monsieur de Flahaut, and I again received renewed expressions of regrets, an assurance that the obstacle to the delivery of a passport had not been overcome, but not a word about again renewing his request in Bavaria.

On the contrary his letter concluded, "My friends here believe I am making a great mistake in leaving just at this time."

This phrase settled my doubts. I felt that since he submitted to, instead of striving to overcome, the obstacles that separated us, he did not have that affection for me which would replace everything else in his life.

I understood that our reunion was a sacrifice he was noble enough to make on my behalf, but which I also was noble enough to refuse.

Perhaps, too, this might be best for me. My mind was now irrevocably made up, since I felt that I was to be the only one who would suffer. But where could I hope to find the courage necessary to give up the one thing I cared about?

However great our moral strength may be, there comes a time when it must crumble.

There is an end to everything, and I felt I had reached that end. Yet I was wrong, since the very sacrifice which I imposed on myself served to stimulate my energy.

The passion which filled my heart to overflowing seemed to increase still more in the midst of my efforts to suppress it.

Constantly I was made aware of its depth, and I was terrified to find how completely it absorbed me. Who would help me? Who would defend me in this struggle against myself? I felt that I must write and say that I no longer loved him, that I had given up once for all that affection around which my life had centered for so long.

How was I to tell him such a lie? How was I to make him believe I was sincere? There was only one way: it was really to renounce what I had loved so long, to implore the help of God and promise Him to cast off forever that affection which had occupied too great a place in my life.

I had been brought up with religious convictions. The discussions I heard in society had shaken my faith. The death of my son had destroyed my trust in Providence.

Had I been guilty I should have accepted my misfortunes; being innocent I doubted that God took any direct interest in human affairs.

While I still asked Him to spare those who were dear to me, I did so from necessity rather than by conviction. One day in Holland I had the presumption to reply to Abbe Bertrand, who was advising me to follow more closely the teachings of my religion: "What can you expect me to say in a confessional? All I could do would be to speak ill of others and well of myself."

I here admit that the greatest of my faults was vanity. Proud of my patience in bearing my domestic misfortunes, spoiled by the praise I had received when I was young, I was convinced that I was a person of special merit.

Since then I have discovered my mistake. At the time of which I am now speaking the uneasiness which filled my heart made my weakness so evident that I could not deceive myself as to my true moral value.

Therefore I did not wish to remain quiescent. From then on, I determined to seek help only in that religion which, while teaching us to love our fellow men, also indicates so clearly the path we are to follow in order never to go astray.

How precious it is to find such a guide! If our passions sometimes cause us to abandon Him, they also may serve to bring us back to Him.

In my walks along the highway I had frequently met pilgrims coming from France and from other far-off countries who were on their way to the famous abbey of Einsiedeln, situated in one of the wildest corners of Switzerland.

I never thought that prayers were particularly efficacious if uttered in any special locality, but I admired the faith which causes people to undergo fatigue, privations and difficulties of all sorts in order to obtain that peace of soul which the torments of the world can no longer disturb.

Not daring to hope to obtain any such reward I, nevertheless, thought that in a spot to which so many persons have come seeking a relief from their troubles I might find some balm for mine.

At such a place one must be able to find learned, enlightened men, free from those political passions which disturb our times.

Perhaps their advice might be beneficial to me. If I chose a spot where the Divine Presence is frequently invoked and honored, to make my vows renouncing that affection which still dominated my heart, I might hope to have a better chance never to break such a solemn pledge.

At the end of October, while the weather was still fine, I drove off in my calash, accompanied only by a single companion. The countryside along the shores of the lake of Zurich through which we passed was most attractive.

As I am always influenced by the sight of a lovely landscape, I felt the calm of some gentle melancholy come over me during this part of our trip but when the mountains rose more steeply, more threateningly about us, when the roar of torrents made itself heard, when the vegetation became more sparse and arid I was filled with alarm at the thought that I was about to give up the one interest in my life, the only friend I still possessed.

I was about to find myself alone, utterly alone. I should not even be able to confide to him the efforts it was costing me to dismiss him forever from my presence. No more should I be able to pour out my feelings into an understanding heart, and it was because I loved him so dearly that I was about to make this sacrifice.

Night came on while I was still plunged in these reflections, and when it was time to leave my carriage I was deeply disturbed in my mind. The silence which surrounded me increased this distress.

A French priest came out to meet me carrying a dark lantern. Before conducting me to the apartment which had been prepared for me in the abbey, he wished to show me the church and the miraculous statue of the Virgin which attracts the unfortunate from such distant points.

If objects sacred to but a small number of persons are always impressive, they become still more so amid surroundings which doubtless long before our time were already the scene of those same conflicts, those same sorrows, those same sacrifices.

Everything filled me with a feeling of religious awe and impressed me with a consciousness of the solemnity of the step I was about to take.

The next day I appeared fearlessly before a judge I had myself chosen and sought out. Without difficulty I described my life and my misfortunes, and whole-heartedly forgave all those who had ever done me harm. But when I was told that the sentiment which had too profoundly stirred my heart was a guilty one, since it had separated me from the only love permitted us, the love of our Creator, and that I must banish it completely from my soul I forgot I had come to implore strength to do this very thing.

Sobs choked me, and I fainted. The kindly priest, deeply moved, turned away and waited for me to have regained courage to myself perform the sacrifice he had demanded. He was right. After having wept copiously I felt my voice revive, and I promised God never to love passionately anyone but Him and to make Him my sole Comforter.

The venerable priest had at all times been gentle rather than severe. Now as I was about to leave he said, "Ah, madame, how you have been maligned! In spite of the solitude of this retired spot English newspapers have reached us. In them there were statements about you which I now realize must have been utterly false.

"Allow me, whenever the opportunity presents itself, to deny such slanders about you. Visitors frequently come here. I shall therefore have the joy of being able to make amends for an injustice which I too committed from ignorance.

"I should never have thought that newspapers would dare print such lies."

"My Father," I answered, "while I leave you full liberty to say what you want to about me, I know people will not believe you. When political passions run as high as they do nowadays, the truth is of only minor importance."

On my return home I wrote Monsieur de Flahaut. I described how deeply my feelings toward him had made me suffer. My health, my reputation, my happiness, all made it necessary to give him up.

I declared that my decision was irrevocable and I begged him, out of friendship, no longer to think of coming to live with me.

How weak is the human heart! Even while I was writing this I still hoped he would not believe me, that he would perhaps appear and force me to take back all I had said. But such was not the case.

In spite of the pain my letter may have caused him he respected the wishes of the woman who had never deceived him.

It would take too long to describe in detail all the tumult that filled my soul. After such violent conflicts it is natural that much time must elapse before the heart can regain its accustomed tranquillity.

Even though the most painful moment be past there are many mornings on which we wake and feel the impress of grief even before we realize that we are alive.

Little by little, the thought of having done our duty comes to relieve the heart of the weight which is oppressing it. We grow conscious of our own powers of resistance, and, as we do so, our courage revives, and calm returns to us.

Only our health remains affected by so many shocks. I suffered from nervous headaches, which kept me in bed for more than a month at a time, headaches which no doctor could cure.

As my illness sprang from moral causes, no one was able to supply the one remedy which I needed, namely, complete peace of mind. My ordeal was still too recent.

At the same time my hesitations were at an end. This in itself was a great step forward. A gentle melancholy stole over me. My heart, seeking some outlet, overflowed with tenderness for all those who surrounded me.

I dreaded the idea of concentrating my affections on a single being, for all those who have known what love really is must fear the thought of loving again. Thus I attained that peaceful state of mind in which our affection remains quiescent.

At times I was conscious of the hatred of certain people. I pitied them for being so unjust and did not resent their attitude.

Indeed I almost sympathized with them, thinking how sorry they would feel when some day they learned that all my life I had been unhappy.

Reading those pamphlets in which every conceivable slander was printed about me and which would formerly have aroused my indignation, I now said to myself: "Perhaps in those days I was too vain, I may have considered myself better than those about me. Therefore I have deserved to be humiliated."

Thinking this, I was able to resign myself to what had occurred. It was then that I discovered through my own experience the difference between the precepts of philosophy and the inspired teachings of religion.

Philosophy teaches us to be charitable as a means of satisfying our personal pride by the thought that we have done good to others. Religion adds to this spirit of self-satisfaction the secret joy of having served the will of the Almighty.

Thus the philosopher thinks only of himself, the Christian only of his God. The former is constantly alone; the latter always has a protector on whom he may call. It is easy to judge which of the two will persevere the longer in the paths of virtue.

The person who feels responsible only toward himself will, the day his passions become too acute, give way to them, and be unable afterwards to regain what he has lost. He possesses no staff to which he may cling, no firm ground on which he may stand.

Such is the fate of the philosopher. But since He to whom we are bound by our promises is at the same time the source of all hope, all justice and all loving-kindness, when we fall we have only to call on Him for help, and His all-powerful arm will come to our rescue.

This is the joy of being a Christian. These thoughts inspired me every day with a stronger confidence in that religion which I had so long neglected, and which so urgently beseeches us to love and forgive our neighbors that our innate need for loving finds its expression in its teachings.

Hence I could not understand how this religion could be used in France as an excuse for that injustice and hatred of others which its teachings condemn. I heard from Paris that people were still talking about me.

Rumor declared I was hidden in the capital. The grand prevot of the department of the Seine, when one of his friends asked him about it, replied, "It is not true, but it is as well to let people think so."

Monsieur Decazes was just then the King's favorite, a post which arouses the jealousy of other courtiers. People recalled the fact of his having been at one time my husband's secretary.

Without stopping to inquire whether I had been in Holland at the time or not, his enemies in order to discredit him spread the report that he had remained attached to my cause and was betraying the King.

It was even said I was hiding in his house. The King, who knew the truth, joked him about this, and, so I was told afterwards, these witticisms did not seem to displease Monsieur Decazes.

One day Monsieur de Vaux went to see Monsieur Decazes on a business matter and complained regarding the scandalous pamphlets that were being published about me, pamphlets whose falsity the minister must be well aware of.

"What can I do about it?" replied Monsieur Decazes. "I did not have them printed and I cannot forbid their being sold. They fit in with our plans. They help discredit those people and keep them out of France."

Thus I constantly served as a pawn in the game of politics. Although I once more belonged to the class of those whose lives are anonymous, or at least not made the subject of public criticism, the class where people are loved for their personal merits, I still found myself pursued, and tormented until I actually regretted the days when I had been so unhappy.

For then at least I had been able to do good to others. Now my presence did them harm. If people wrote me or inquired sympathetically about me, they were annoyed, robbed of their possessions and imprisoned.

Nothing but hate now surrounded me, whereas formerly I at least received marks of apparent affection from those with whom I came in contact.

This middle-class life, which I had thought possessed so many charms, only offered me renewed causes for distress. Thus we are constantly being deceived by our imagination even when it limits our desires and makes us ask for less than we actually have.

Common sense advises us to remain as we are, to resign ourselves to our fate and to make the most of what lofty and worthy gifts it offers us.

Happiness lies in ourselves rather than in our relations with others. We can lose everything except such satisfaction as we can find in ourselves.

Therefore I realized I must commence to enjoy what I still possessed. I said to myself : "If I no longer am very wealthy and able to do a great deal of good, I shall do as much as my means permit. If people accuse me of wicked deeds, I shall console myself by not committing them. If I encounter ingratitude, I shall pity those who have appreciated my kindness toward them."

Thus every day a new impression led me to that state of resignation which forms the happiness of those who no longer seek for earthly joys. But, as I have already said, it was only by degrees and after much time had passed that such quieting thoughts managed to calm my distress.

How often did I still feel my heart overcome by the thoughts of my loneliness! This thought, which was the one I most dreaded, was the one which everything, even the beauty of nature, was constantly evoking before me, despite my effort to banish it.

The house I lived in stood on the shores of the lake. The wind howled about it savagely; terrible hurricanes beat upon it as though they sought to tear it from its foundation.

This spectacle of nature's violence was too much in keeping with my state of mind for me not to enjoy it. It seemed to symbolize my life. Come safely into harbor, I now watched the storm and thought of the calm that would follow. But when, following winter's wrath, the gentle charm of spring enveloped the spots where I had hoped to be so happy, the sight of them became more than I could bear.

I no longer dared linger among them, I was forced to flee for fear of mourning the illusion I had conjured up there. The need of finding something to drive away the thoughts which I wished to expel from my heart made me more anxious than ever to own a little plot of ground of my own.

The court of Baden had forbidden the authorities of Constance to allow me to buy anything there. Consequently I turned my steps toward Switzerland, and on my drives in that direction looked for some place that might be suitable.

The château of Arenenberg, small, dilapidated, but picturesquely situated, pleased me. The authorities of the canton of Thurgovia allowed me to purchase it.

This was the more to their credit as all the other countries had repulsed me in accordance with the request of France, which wanted to send me into Silesia, Moravia or the Crimea.

Consequently, although I was not allowed to live in the property I had just bought, I considered myself lucky not to be obliged to resell it again.

The French Ambassador intrigued against me, and the Swiss Diet was on the point of being forced to take action, although to do so would have been a violation of state rights, as the canton of Thurgovia pointed out, when I notified the local authorities that to avoid further embarrassment for them I would postpone my residence in Thurgovia until more peaceful times.

Therefore there was no decree issued either for or against me. The reigning Princess of Hohenzollern lived a day's journey from Constance. She paid me a visit, and displayed all that maternal affection which she had shown me when I was a child.

I spent several days at her palace, and was received in the most friendly fashion by the members of her family. While I had been living at Constance the Grand Duke of Baden treated me with the greatest possible consideration.

His wife had entirely conquered him by her fine mind and personal beauty. She was the only one of our family who still maintained her rank.

At first she had been feared, then admired and finally adored by her subjects. Her conduct was always exemplary. Her brilliant imagination, her keen and active intelligence, the charm of her features made one think that she was perhaps only pleasing, and it is always with astonishment that one discovers behind all these superficial charms a fine, well-balanced mind and a heart filled with good intentions.

She wished to come and see me. The Grand Duke intended to accompany her. As soon as his intentions became known the diplomats, alarmed by a visit which they found hard to understand, took action immeately, and instead of the visit I expected I had a call from an officer of the Grand Duke's household, who informed me that on account of the reiterated protests of the French envoy the Grand Duke was obliged to forbid my continuing to live on his territory.

Thus once more I found myself a homeless wanderer and again forced, in spite of my desire not to have anything more to do with the different governments, to request one of them to offer me a refuge.

I had not the slightest idea which way to turn, since all the members of our family were prisoners of the Holy Alliance. It was necessary for the members of this Alliance to agree, so that I might find some spot on which to live, and they never could make up their minds as to where that spot was to be. Consequently I was unable to secure the rest which I was so much in need of.

I wrote my brother to inform him of what was happening. He spoke to the King of Bavaria about it, and the King suggested that I come and live in his dominions. My brother had me buy a house at Augsburg, in order that this acceptance of a monarch's hospitality should place me directly under his jurisdiction, and that, at any rate, the Holy Alliance should no longer feel that they had the right of deciding my fate.

The Duc de Vicence had been correct when he declared we should be at the mercy of those who had defeated us. At the moment I was leaving Paris he had implored me to place myself directly under the protection of the Emperor of Russia so as to be able to live quietly in Switzerland, where I intended to go.

He assured me it was only with passports signed by that monarch that I could hope to be left in peace in a spot I selected. Wounded, however, by the Emperor's attitude toward me, I had declined to ask any favor of him.

Now, in the same country where my brother was living, the protection of the King of Bavaria became extremely useful to me, and I hastened to accept his offer.

CHAPTER XX

CALM AFTER STORM

(MAY 1817-1820)

Augsburg—A Trip to Munich—A Trip to Leghorn—The Last Efforts of Louis—Return to Augsburg—Napoleon and Lally-Tolendal—Scenes with Cardinal Fesch and Louis—The Queen's Memoirs—Monsieur de Flahaut's Marriage—Calm After Storm."

I DECIDED to live at Augsburg because I had been I told it was quiet and without social gaieties. Society did not attract me, all I wanted was tranquillity and the affection of those about me.

I found both there. Before settling down in the house I had bought I went to Munich to see the King. He possesses the greatest gifts a sovereign can have, a warm-heartedness which misfortune cannot chill, a tact which seeks to conceal the favors this kindness bestows, and a graciousness of manner which on this occasion indicated a purely paternal interest in my well-being.

My reception was a thoroughly cordial one, and the King took care to display as much consideration toward me as he would have done in the past.

Doubtless, unlike so many other people, he did not feel that in order to annihilate a lost cause it is necessary to be rude to a person whom a short time before one would have been flattered to have as a guest.

Nor have I the slightest criticism to make of the Queen or Prince Charles, the King's second son. The latter particularly, whose affection for my brother had increased with our misfortunes, took especial pains to make my stay in his country a pleasant one.

The local authorities, following the example set by their master, treated me with the utmost deference, and even the ordinary people seemed anxious to make me forget I was among strangers.

I was greatly grieved to have been so long separated from my elder son. His father consented to have him come and spend two months with me.

This was a great consolation in the midst of all my sorrows. My husband also was anxious to see my younger son. I decided to take a trip to Italy.

I left in June 1818 for the purpose of taking sea-baths at Leghorn. The journey through a country still filled with memories of my brother was a source of satisfaction to me.

Every new road, every new or rebuilt public building was a token of his administration.

"That was built when the French were here," people would say; and I enjoyed seeing how a regime in spite of having been overthrown and daily slandered, although its benefits were still visible everywhere—had done only good wherever it had ruled.

The gay vivaciousness of the Italians reminded me of the French and contributed toward making me feel happy.

In the mood I had lately been in, the gravity of the Northern races had been more congenial to me for a time, it had been more in keeping with my own feelings; but the entertainment we derive from new objects, although it may tend to become tiresome in the long run, still does us good by distracting our attention from our own troubles.

Under such a beneficent sky our grief grows less poignant even though we make no conscious effort to shake it off. At the sight of such an exuberant spirit of vitality as eddies all around you the eyes sparkle once more, and the wounded heart beats again.

Brought up amidst the stately buildings of France I was amazed to find that mere ruins could produce a more impressive effect than our most stately edifices. How did the days of the Romans manage to produce such marvels? How far away from them we seem!

The thought which consoled me for the difference existing between their buildings and ours was that then the workmen were slaves, now they are free men, laboring of their own accord.

The widow of Marshal Ney, who happened to be in Italy just then, came to stay with me. This old friend gave me all the details of the dreadful calamity that had befallen her family and all her unavailing efforts to save her husband.

Everywhere her prayers had been in vain, and even at the audience which the Duc de Berry had granted her he had said "I cannot have my own way against the opinions of the King's advisors. Moreover, you will admit yourself, my dear Duchess, that as long as a single one of those officers remains alive the King's throne is in danger."

A little while before the execution took place, the Marshal had embraced his children tenderly and had forbidden them ever to attempt to avenge his death.

He had added that he forgave his enemies. While his wife, her voice broken by sobs, spoke of the hope she still had in the King's clemency he had replied, "Go and ask him to pardon me if you want to. I do not intend to do so."

Everywhere she had been repulsed. At that time it was not the fashion to grant pardons. At last, accompanied by her sister, she had reached the Tuilleries and begged everyone to be allowed to see the King. "You cannot see him now," an officer had replied. "His Majesty is having breakfast and it might disturb his digestion."

All her misfortunes had given the Duchess an energy of character which she did not naturally possess. Her principal qualities had been her sensitiveness, her kindness, her gentleness and her frankness.

Moreover she had the charm and attractiveness of a person of many social accomplishments. Now that she had become the sole support of her four boys she realized the importance of her new duties.

Although she knew the principal incidents of my life she had previously been unaware of my private misfortunes. It was probably this fact that caused her to use her influence to bring about the reconciliation between me and my husband which the latter appeared to desire.

He had hurried to Leghorn as soon as he heard I was there, selected lodgings close to where I was staying, and took care that I should be frequently informed of his intense desire to have me leave Bavaria and settle in Italy.

It was even arranged that, when we had our first interview, my children should come in, throw themselves on their knees and implore us not to continue to live apart.

Who would have thought that at the very time he was making these efforts to bring me back to him, my husband was having a book published in which he declared that he had been constrained by force to marry me? Was this not enough in itself to destroy all hopes of a reconciliation?

At any rate my decision had been made, once for all. It was a question of life and death to me. Nor, simply for my children's happiness, could I consider allowing them to witness such a spectacle of domestic misery as my memories of the past convinced me would occur in the future.

My husband's character had not changed in the slightest. The reason was simple enough. We can correct something we know is wrong, but cannot cure ourselves of traits of character we consider admirable. Such faults increase as time goes on.

A distrust of one's own ability and that of others, a generosity which prompts one to make gifts, while doubting the sincerity of the thanks expressed, a severely critical attitude toward everything great and small, and a constant contempt for the feelings and opinions of others, all combine to estrange people and cause us to receive nothing but ingratitude in spite of what we may have done for others.

The Emperor had preferred my husband to his other brothers. He had educated him and considered him as a son.

Perhaps, however, he had sometimes treated him too severely. Once, for example, having locked Louis in his room to do his lesson in mathematics, the Consul came in and found a volume of Rousseau and some poetry on the table. He threw everything out of the window and put my husband under arrest for several days.

I often heard the Emperor declare that it was the works of Rousseau which had spoiled my husband's mind, that he had read too much of that distinguished author, whose worst quality, I always thought, was to expect others to behave better than he did himself.

My husband combined with an acute sensitiveness a desire to love his fellow men and to help them. At the same time, however, he suffered from the delusion that they all wished to deceive him and do him harm.

I remember the Emperor one day, speaking of my husband, said: "Louis has created a world of his own. He does not even understand what marriage means.

He believes literally the saying that husband and wife are one. Consequently he is constantly surprised that when he is sick his wife should be well, that she can like dancing if he does not, and that she can feel warm when he feels cold."

This was so true that I could not suppress a smile. These few phrases had summed him up completely. The annoyance I felt at my husband's behavior, the memory of my former suffering and the fear of being obliged to endure it all again caused me to fall seriously ill, and I did not think I should recover.

As soon as I was better, and when the only thing I wanted was to leave Leghorn as soon as possible, my husband asked to be allowed to come to see me. For the first time in my life I refused one of his requests.

He did not wish me to return to Germany, and I constantly feared that he would take my second son away from me in order to force me to stay.

I promised to bring the little boy often to see him and to treat the father of my children with all the respect to which he was entitled. I added that, after all we had suffered, the only way by which we could hope to forget the past was to live apart.

I learned later that he continued to try to have our marriage annulled, but that the assembly of cardinals after meeting expressly to examine the case decided there was no reason to do this.

As for me, I returned to Augsburg and there finally was able to be quiet. Nothing disturbed my ordinary occupations. I spent all my time reading. I continued my studies of the arts and paid no attention to politics.

I should have been ashamed to do so, in view of what people said about me. I sought to improve my mind and especially to learn to judge things at their proper value.

Although living on foreign soil I was surrounded by objects from home. All the new books, pamphlets and newspapers that appeared were sent to me.

A generous gesture on the part of a member of any political group made my heart beat faster. But I was indignant if people behaved badly.

I felt ashamed to see my countrymen display either lack of will-power or cowardliness. I desired all the men belonging to a great nation to be equally great, and when I saw them swayed by petty ambitions my patriotism was as much hurt as though I shared their faults.

Another thing that made a deep impression on me was to hear all parties attack Emperor Napoleon with equal fury.

No one was sufficiently proud to keep still, all gave way to the fashion of the day. Even the kings, jealous of a king greater than they were, after forming an alliance to overthrow him, kept on seeking to sully his reputation. They did not stop to think that sooner or later it would be on their own heads that this disdain they pretended to feel toward another sovereign would fall.

The destruction of that respect for the throne with which a truly great man had just inspired people annihilated for years to come the feeble prestige that ordinary monarchs still enjoyed.

On the other hand, the desire for freedom was so intense throughout the nation that, conscious of her glory, she forgot the man who had won it for her.

Those who defended the national interests believed they could obtain from a dynasty founded on old traditions the liberty which in self-defense that dynasty

was bound to suppress. To be sure the nation, either of her free will or because she was forced by foreign armies, was permitted to break the bond of gratitude which bound her to the Emperor. But at least, after having for so long helped the genius to carry out his plans, she now had no right to insult him.

Of course there were only a few people who understood the Emperor Napoleon's character or were brilliant enough to be able to form an idea of his genius.

I myself, living beside him and better able to observe him than anybody else, had not realized his greatness in the midst of all the celebrated men who surrounded him. It was only now that the childishness of those who sought to belittle him and the mediocrity of his successors taught me how great he had been.

Judging him impartially, what other ambition could one attribute to him than of founding a great Empire and new, useful and permanent laws?

Without any predominating taste or habit, lacking all those passions which cause a man to lose his self-control, the Emperor devoted his days and nights to this great task.

Was it not jealousy and hatred that alone had prevented his continuing it?

Thus, in order to judge him, one must not isolate him from the circumstances in which he lived.

He has been called a despot. But what punishment did he inflict on those who later boasted of having betrayed him and of whose intrigues he was well aware?

All he did was to banish them for a few months to their country homes. Since then have the kings shown themselves equally magnanimous?

Time will make people more just toward the Emperor, not only in their criticism of his character but in their appreciation of what he accomplished.

When a change of fortune raises us above the crowd, exposing us to its gaze, it should be easier to judge us without making a mistake.

There should be a greater unanimity in the impression we create. Yet no one was farther above the masses and at the same time more diversely criticized than Emperor Napoleon.

Each one wished to see him and describe him in his own way. Even the comments of those who were the most favorable toward him were frequently absurd.

Sometimes he was pictured as the hero of a melodrama, a fascinating charmer, a tyrant.

Then again people would deny that he had either courage or intelligence. The famous Madame de Staël in her attack on him made many mistakes.

I can understand that her exile had embittered her, but her unfair and hostile attitude is too evident on every page of her writings.

Her hatred has something vulgar about it, and lacks the distinction one would expect from such a woman, particularly when dealing with such a man.

She is not the only one to be mistaken in her judgments. The facts were falsified even in the most insignificant details. It was said that when the Emperor spoke to women he did so curtly and in rude terms.

It is true that he made them feel uncomfortable, but it was on account of his unexpected questions, which it embarrassed them to answer.

Yet he never did more than make a mild witticism even to those who had made remarks about him and deserved a reproof.

He would step up to them and say smilingly, "And how is the tongue wagging today?"

The Emperor thought that woman's sole interest was, and should be, how she was dressed. Women's influence in any other field of activity annoyed him.

Consequently, at the state receptions the few words he said to them always referred to that subject. "How becomingly you are dressed! Is that the latest fashion? With that helmet-shaped hat you resemble the goddess Minerva. You look like a shepherdess or the wife of a sultan today."

Once when I was present he said to the wife of an ambassador, "It seems to me that your wreath of roses and your red sash don't go together. The combination does not conform to the laws of dress."

The lady, much embarrassed, did not know what to say.

When the reception was over I reproached the Emperor for having upset her. "Was not I right?" he answered.

"Yes, but she will take the matter to heart and feel very much hurt over it."

"You do not understand such matters, my daughter. Do you mean to say you do not know that women are always pleased at being noticed, even though one criticizes them a little?"

Perhaps he was wrong in this; I am inclined to think so. But I am simply explaining his point of view and the reason for which he was feared, fears which expressed themselves by declaring that he was a man who could say only disagreeable things to women.

A more justly founded charge was that of being too violent in his expressions. But this never amounted to those bursts of rage which people talked about. These were the two occasions on which I saw him the most wrought up about anything: Once it was against his uncle Cardinal Fesch. The matter under discussion related to the affairs of the Church. The Emperor considered it ridiculous for people to be obliged to pay for the sacraments, but admitted that the priests were not well enough off.

"There is only one thing to do, introduce the tithing system again," declared the Cardinal.

On hearing these words the Emperor lost his temper. As a member of the Emperor's family, although lacking his intelligence and force of character, the Cardinal considered he had a right to his own point of view.

The Emperor, greatly annoyed that one of his relatives should suggest something so contrary to his whole system of government, strode up and down, and taking his snuff box in his hands dashed it violently on the floor, then left the room.

This was the only sign of rage he gave. Another time when my husband was obstinately opposing the Emperor's plan to unite Flushing and Nimeguen

to France, the Emperor delivered a tirade against the Dutch, calling them a nation of petty tradespeople who had sold themselves to England.

In his rage he used a number of insulting epithets. My husband after having held his own for some time finally said quite calmly, "If you have such a poor opinion of the Dutch, why do you want to make them your subjects?"

This remark quieted the Emperor immediately. He pinched the King's ear and went out. Nothing more was said about the matter.

Much has been said in regard to the Emperor's way of looking at people, and what a piercing glance he had. No matter how deeply hidden a secret might be, he seemed to be able to discern it.

This was absolutely true.

How could you keep a secret from someone who when he looked at you seemed to know all about it? At the same time, as everybody felt embarrassed and uneasy when in his presence, it was difficult for him to discover a man's real character.

He managed to find out what people sought to conceal, but not what they really were. Only when you trust someone do you display your true nature. It was part of the Emperor's policy to gather

about him men of ability, irrespective of their political ideas. In order to do this he knew so well how to make himself agreeable that it was hard to resist him.

The Comte de Lally-Tolendal, who by his eloquence had redeemed his father's memory, had nevertheless not been able on account of political events to regain possession of his father's estates, which had been sequestered.

Shortly before the marriage of his daughter, who had been brought up with me by Madame Campan at Saint-Germain, Monsieur de Lally-Tolendal, having no dowry to give her, wrote the First Consul about it.

The Consul granted him one hundred and fifty thousand francs. Monsieur de Lally-Tolendal went to Saint Cloud to express his thanks, and received a cordial reception.

The Consul said to him "I cannot conceive why, having taken a brilliant part in the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly, and not having compromised himself in any of the bloody excesses which later took place, Monsieur de Lally does not do his share in serving the interests of regenerated France."

The Count replied, "The King of England saved me from the great danger I was in during the Revolution by claiming I was an English gentleman. Since then I have received an allowance from that monarch.

Can I be like the bat in the fable who declared, according to circumstances, 'I am a bird, look at my wings; I am a mouse, look at my fur'?"

"But," answered the Consul, "in what language was it that you defended your father? In what language did you defend your King?"

"In French."

"Then, Monsieur de Lally, you should realize that we always belong to a country in whose language we have expressed such noble sentiments."

This is an example of the way in which the Emperor knew on appropriate occasions how to make the most flattering and agreeable remarks. But Monsieur de Lally, although much touched, persisted in his refusal to take a government post, but remained perfectly quiet either in Paris or on his son-in-law's estate near Bordeaux.

How can we be expected to believe people who, after having faithfully served a man so appreciative of their talents and capacities, suddenly deny that they ever acted of their own free will and complain of having been forced to adopt a line of conduct which they themselves decided on? But such things were to be expected.

A new dynasty is always criticized, and still more severely if it is overthrown.

Small-minded people always use insults as a means both of justifying their past conduct and of securing future advancement. Both these things happened in our case. I had reached the point of not worrying so much about all the absurd tales that were told about me. I could do nothing in regard to them. It was part of a deliberate plan. Even my mother's name, which until then had been respected, was now the subject of ridiculous anecdotes.

A woman who pretended to be an adept at sorcery went so far as to make up a completely untrue and improbable set of memoirs about her.

Sometimes, too, a series of letters said to have been written by her would make its appearance. The foreigners also, on their own account, went about collecting stories of obviously improbable incidents.

These stories they would publish and pretend to think them true. A clever man to whom I one day spoke of how annoyed I was to see the public continue to be interested in my affairs said: "You cannot expect it to be otherwise. It is because of your lofty rank. Whether you do something or remain quiet, whether your behavior is admirable or the reverse, does not alter the matter. As long as people believe that on account of your former connections you may still be dangerous, they will fear you and be curious about you."

I was struck by the truth of this remark and it made me still more indifferent to what was said about me. Then, too, temporary unpopularity is not worth worrying about. As time goes on, one may hope to be judged impartially. Death brings us a step nearer this final verdict, and knowing it is bound to come at last we can bear the present with resignation.

Everywhere I went it was curiosity rather than sympathy that caused most people to want to know me. I was often amused to see how entirely people's opinions changed as soon as they had actually seen me. Several persons admitted this to me afterwards.

A queen who is said to have been closely involved in great events, the stepdaughter and sister-in-law of the greatest general the world has ever known, must, so some people think, be capable of putting herself at the head of an army and leading troops into battle the way Jeanne d'Arc and Jeanne de Montfort did.

People imagined her tall, robust and dark, with a proud, hard face and strongly modeled features, and they found themselves in front of a feeble, thin, blonde woman whose face bore the marks of sorrow still more clearly than those of time.

As I have already said, I owed many friends to the fact that people had been prejudiced against me in advance,

Therefore I ought not to complain. If I had had the misfortune to be born to a crown I could have hoped to preserve only supporters. As it is, I now possess friends.

These persons who came to like me, after at first being merely curious about me, are the ones to whom I felt I must make myself better known through these memoirs. I had never thought of writing my memoirs.

Only after the Emperor's divorce, when I heard someone blaming my brother for having agreed to it, I realized how difficult it is for truth to become widely known. In a few moments I had noted down all the details of this event, and that was all the writing I had ever done.

Madame la Comtesse de Nansouty, an exceedingly clever woman, was at Aix-la-Chapelle when I was there in 1812. She was very anxious to have me write the story of my life.

I assured her repeatedly I should never have patience enough to do so. "Well, then, just tell it to me," she said, "and I will write it down as we go along."

The next day, indeed, she brought me an account of some incidents of my childhood which I had told her the day before. But they were too cleverly written. It did not sound like me. Although quite willing to admit the excellence of this system I confessed that I did not care to hear myself speaking in any other voice than my own.

The book never got any further than the first page, which she kept. Now, in a perfectly tranquil spot, my heart and head still full of the events which have just taken place, I have tried to sort them out.

It has not been difficult. Truth is always easy to tell. When one does not have to try to construct a plot anyone is clever enough to relate just what happened.

I had so often been obliged to examine all my past actions that my entire life was vividly present in my mind. It was easy enough to recall my feelings on different occasions.

This habit of dwelling on what had occurred in the past had a great deal to do with keeping my grief unassuaged. But as I wrote on, I felt a sensation of relief come over me, as though the weight of the past, which had so long oppressed my mind and spirits, was gradually diminishing. It seemed as if I were confiding my troubles to a friend, and I already began to experience that forgetfulness of our ills which generally only time can bring.

The trouble with memoirs generally is that they do not give a clear enough idea of our social position and the nature of our relations to those in power.

Personal vanity causes us always to try to make ourselves unduly important, as, for instance, when we pose as having given advice on occasions when we merely obeyed someone else's instructions.

As far as I am concerned, although I saw a great deal of the Emperor, I should be entirely wrong if I said I ever had the least influence over him.

While I really did consider myself as his daughter, I, like everyone else, was so much in awe of him that I rarely ventured to address him unless he spoke first, and my replies were frequently confused.

He even said to me one day: "People tell me you are clever. I don't know anything about it. I always feel as though you were ten years old. It is the same with Eugene. I have never been able to get used to hearing him reason out something logically." And the Emperor added: "That is the trouble with parents when they get old. They can never realize that children grow up, and sometimes could actually teach them a lesson."

My mother was the only person I ever saw who was entirely at her ease with the Emperor, the only one who had the slightest influence over him, and this was only in minor matters.

In my solitude at Augsburg my days were so peaceful and quiet that my health began to improve.

In order to live on, I required a life free from all sensations, even those of happiness. Perhaps the latter would have killed me. I was satisfied to be able to recall the past without regret.

Then, too, close at hand I had the best of consolations, my brother, who frequently came over from Munich to see me. With such a friend life still was worth living. I also received frequent letters from Monsieur de Flahaut.

They always contained expressions of the warmest friendship, the most perfect admiration. He had married the young person who had given him such a cordial welcome in England.

He was happy, and his happiness was dear to me because I felt I was at least partly responsible for it. For a long while I had not known how to write him in a natural manner.

Little by little I conquered my reserve by the thought that in him I possessed a true friend, someone who knew me better than anybody else did and whose solicitude would reward me for all the pain hostile criticism had caused me. The barrier which separated us safeguarded my peace of mind. All that was left of the romantic side of my nature was the need of constantly perceiving nobility of soul in others. The only things which affected me were accounts of some heroic action.

I was inclined to think that all those who were attracted to me must possess lofty ideals and although opportunity for intrigue sometimes attracts people as much as sympathy with misfortune I was never mistaken in my intuitions.

I had had too much experience. When a person has suffered much himself and become aware of the intensity of human emotions through having either yielded to or curbed his own impulses, he knows the secrets of the human heart by what his own has endured.

Frequently the heart teaches us more than the most subtle mind could grasp.

I also read a great deal. In order to enjoy a book I had to find in it descriptions of the better elements of human nature rather than its weaknesses.

I preferred Rousseau weeping over misfortunes which never took place to Voltaire launching his epigrams at both the just and the unjust.

I enjoyed the madness of Don Quixote and the common sense of Sancho more than the brilliant and yet depressing picture of society so admirably drawn in "Gil Bias."

I had to have something that appealed to my emotions. Doubtless it was my heart that required nourishment rather than my brain.

I also enjoyed authors who provoke reflection. La Bruyere, Massillon, Pope, Plato, "The Imitation of Christ," all those works which foster and encourage the purity and elevation of the soul charmed me more and more every day. But the most delightful occupation of all was the education of my youngest son, who spent most of his time with me while his elder brother was in Italy with his father.

I paid especial attention to his moral instruction. A man can teach good things, a woman inspires them; her words penetrate more deeply. What comes from the heart enters another heart more readily.

I will stop here. There is nothing left to tell. As I look back over my life the spectacle I contemplate no longer pains me. Entirely absorbed by my duties toward my husband, I had hoped to find my happiness in a pleasant domestic life.

Alas, I was sorely mistaken. I sought refuge in a sincere affection; I thought that in order to be happy one needed only to be loved, that a pure and tender attachment formed life's fairest jewel.

Again I was wrong. Perfection is not to be found in a human heart, and I sought it in vain. Public admiration seemed to me for a moment to be a compensation.

That too was taken from me, and I was obliged to steel my heart against this new blow.

I felt I had counted too much on human gratitude, and from then on I decided to do good without expecting any return.

Having been disappointed in everything I shall seek to create my own happiness without counting on anything or anybody else. I shall love my fellow beings, I shall do what I can to help them, I shall expect no gratitude. In the past I hoped in vain to obtain some appreciation.

The sight of unhappiness and distress will always attract me, and if I can soothe it I shall do so. That is the true, perfect joy since it is something no one can take from us.

I therefore believe I have found the real road to happiness and I look forward to the future with serenity. Although I am alone, exiled from my home, mourning the terrible fate of the benefactor of my family, I often say to myself: "My life, however, is over. No longer need I fear passions. I have conquered them. No longer do I fear misfortune. I am able to bear it. And if I have found a way in which to be quieter and to improve, what else can I hope for myself? Only this, that I may live a little longer in the memory of my dear compatriots, in the hearts of my friends, and at last die in the arms of my children. Such is my last wish."

Augsburg, 1820.

HORTENSE.

